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STAGE SET FOR 'DKShi SARKARA'

DK Shivakumar elected CLP leader; to take oath as CM at the Lok Bhavan Glass House at 4.05 pm on June 3

BENGALURU

The Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Saturday afternoon unanimously elected DK Shivakumar as its new leader.

Shivakumar's name was proposed by Siddaramaiah, the outgoing chief minister, and seconded by Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara before being approved by the legislators.

The meeting was overseen by AICC general secretaries KC Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala.

However, the CLP meeting, held at the conference hall of Vidhana Soudha, to elect the new leader took a break, and top leaders, including Siddaramaiah, Venugopal and Surjewala went into a huddle in a separate room, as per sources.

The CLP also passed a resolution thanking Siddaramaiah for his leadership and contributions to Karnataka and the Congress party.

"I have resigned from the post of Congress Legislature Party leader and Chief Minister. The decision to appoint the next leader has been left to the high command," said Siddaramaiah after leaving the CLP meeting.

Earlier, Shivakumar met Venugopal and Surjewala at a hotel ahead of the meeting.

Swearing-in ceremony at Lok Bhavan

The swearing-in ceremony of DK Shivakumar as the new chief minister will be held at the Glass House of Lok Bhavan here on June 3, said Congress state unit working president GC Chandrashekhar.

Addressing the media here, the Rajya Sabha member said, initially, there was confusion regarding the venue. Later, it was decided to hold it in the Governor's House.

Cong says no to extravaganza amid fuel crisis

According to him, there were discussions on booking around 10,000 to 15,000 buses from different parts of the state to bring people to Bengaluru for a large-scale event, but keeping the fuel crisis and the traffic congestion in mind it was cancelled.

"The swearing-in ceremony should not be extravagant. It should be conducted as simply as possible and should reflect a spirit of work and service rather than display or pomp. The party has taken a decision and issued directions that the event should be conducted in a simple manner," Chandrashekhar said.

He appealed to all party workers and supporters not to make efforts to rush to the venue and cooperate, so that there is no traffic congestion and no inconvenience to the public.

DKS CHOOSES AUSTERE CEREMONY

- Governor Gehlot to administer the oath of office.
- Initially, the oath-taking ceremony was planned on the Grand Steps of Vidhana Soudha, but later it was decided to scale down the grandness, reportedly after the advice by Shivakumar's deity Ajjayya and the police.
- Also, the plan to ferry people in 10,000-15,000 buses from various districts of the state was also shun, choosing an austere ceremony to avoid inconveniences to citizens on a weekday, and also keeping in mind fuel crisis and related expenses.
- After the swearing-in, the new CM will visit all district headquarters to meet voters and party workers.
- Speculation is rife that a dozen ministers will take oath along with Shivakumar in the first batch.
- Shivakumar has reportedly instructed his supporters to keep celebrations muted as he is wary of antagonising outgoing CM Siddaramaiah's supporters.

Know 'Kanakapura Bande'

Popularly called 'Kanakapura Bande' -- the granite rock of Kanakapura-- the assembly segment he represents, Doddaalahalli Kempegowda Shivakumar, is a prominent figure within the Indian National Congress (INC) and serves as the president of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC). Born on May 15, 1962, in Dodda Alahalli village near Kanakapura town in Bengaluru South district to Kempegowda and Gauramma, Shivakumar entered politics during his college days in the early 1980s and gradually earned the reputation of being the Congress party's 'troubleshooter'.

POLITICAL ASCENT

1989
Elected as a MLA for the first time from the Sathanur constituency at just 27 years old, going on to serve as the Minister of Prisons.

1999 - 2004
Served as the Minister for Urban Development in SM Krishna's cabinet.

2028 - PRESENT
Following the delimitation of constituencies, Shivakumar shifted to the Kanakapura seat, winning the constituency in 2008, 2013, 2018, and 2023.

2013–2018
Held key portfolios in the state cabinet, serving as Minister for Energy, and Minister for Water Resources during the Congress-JDS coalition gov.

RECENT LEADERSHIP

2020: Took over as Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief, replacing Dinesh Gundu Rao.

2023: After Congress swept to a massive majority in the May 2023 Karnataka Legislative Assembly elections, he was sworn in as the 9th Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka.

Congress Party's Key trouble-shooter

Shivakumar is widely recognized on a national scale as a master political strategist and crisis manager for the Congress. He notably hosted and shielded Congress MLAs from Maharashtra and Gujarat in Bengaluru resorts during critical trust votes and Rajya Sabha elections, helping to secure victories for the party.

PERSONAL LIFE

Outside of politics, Shivakumar is a successful businessman and is routinely ranked among India's wealthiest politicians. He married Usha in 1993, and the couple has three children. His elder daughter, Aishwarya, is married to Amartya Hegde, the grandson of former CM SM Krishna and son of late CCD founder, VG Siddhartha.

Banerjee gets egg 'Abhishek' in Bengal

KOLKATA

TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee was roughed up allegedly by locals, especially women, during his visit to Sonarpur in West Bengal meet the families of post-poll violence victims on Saturday.

Amid a chorus of 'thief' slogans hurled at Banerjee, the TMC MP was attacked with stones, shoes and eggs. Many even attempted to rain blows and kicks on him.

Security personnel escorted the TMC leader wearing a helmet amid the attack. "Look what they have done to me. This was pre-planned. There are no police in the area. They want to kill me. I will not leave this place till the local police send their force and offer protection to the victims' families," Banerjee said while meeting the family of a deceased post-poll violence victim.

Speaking to the media after the incident, Banerjee alleged that the attack was sponsored by the BJP. "It's all BJP-sponsored. Look what they have done. This is their example of democracy. It hasn't even been a month, and the police are nowhere to be seen," he said.

He further claimed that the attackers intended to kill him and said the entire incident had been captured on camera. "They wanted to kill me. The whole incident has been captured on camera. We will definitely let the High Court know about this. We will also let the Governor know about this. I will definitely move to court," he said.

Former Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee reacted strongly to the incident in an X post, "Rulers became killers – shame on you BJP."

Tech glitch delays CUET-UG at some centres

NEW DELHI

The CUET-UG 2026 for admissions into undergraduate degree programmes across India was delayed at some centres on Saturday due to a technical glitch, the National Testing Agency said.

"TCS has reported that a technical glitch at their end delayed the commencement of CUET UG 2026 at some centres on Saturday. The issue has since been resolved, and the exam is being conducted with full compensatory time so that no candidate is disadvantaged," the NTA said on X.

"Afternoon session timing (revised): Reporting/entry from 2:30 pm; examination begins at 4:00 pm instead of 3:00 pm," the NTA said.

Morning session candidates were given the full duration of the paper and were allowed to exit only after the completion of the test, it said. "NTA sincerely regrets the inconvenience caused to the students and parents," the agency said.

The agency also provided a helpline number - +91-11-40759000 - and email support - cuet-ug@nta.ac.in - for any assistance.

K Krithivasan, CEO and MD at TCS, said that "a brief technical issue" caused a delay of around two hours in the morning shift of CUET-UG. "The issue was promptly identified and resolved by our technical teams and the examination has since resumed without any impact to the sanctity of the exam. We regret the inconvenience," the statement said. It added that its teams are "actively monitoring all systems" and remain committed to working closely with the NTA "to ensure seamless conduct of the computer-based tests."

Several students and parents reported the delay on X and alleged lack of communication at the examination centres.

The Common University Entrance Test-Undergraduate, or CUET-UG, is a standardised, national-level entrance exam conducted by the NTA for admissions into undergraduate degree programmes across central, state, and select private universities.

Will hold re-test for candidates hit by glitch: NTA

The NTA on Saturday announced that candidates affected by a technical disruption during the Common University Entrance Test (CUET-UG) 2026 will be given another opportunity to appear for the examination. The announcement came after a technical issue disrupted the conduct of the exam at several centres during the first shift on May 30, causing delays and uncertainty for thousands of candidates. Details will follow shortly on http://cuet.nta.ac.in

Claims of being vishwaguru but can't conduct single exam: RaGa

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday accused PM Modi of having "completely destroyed" the country's education system and said the government has been unable to conduct even a single exam properly while making claims of being a "vishwaguru".

His remarks came after the National Testing Agency said the CUET-UG 2026 for admissions into undergraduate degree programmes across India was delayed at some centres on Saturday due to a technical glitch. In an X post, he said, "NEET, CBSE, SSC, and today, CUET. Four examinations. One crore students. Not a single one could be conducted honestly."

"Claims of being a 'vishwaguru', but are unable to conduct even a single exam," he added.

'No proposal to declare cow national animal or ban slaughter nationwide'

NEW DELHI

The Centre is not considering any proposal to grant the cow national animal status or enforce a nationwide ban on cow slaughter, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal has said, amid continuing demands from various groups for such measures.

Meghwal, as per agencies, said representations seeking national animal status for the cow and a countrywide prohibition on cow slaughter are regularly submitted to Members of Parliament and the government.

"Various organisations keep working on these issues and approach MPs as well. People submit applications and make representations saying such a measure should be taken," he said.

However, the minister clarified that no proposal on the matter is presently before the Union Cabinet. "As of now, there is no such matter under the Cabinet's consideration. If a proposal reaches a stage where government or Cabinet intervention is required, we will inform you," Meghwal said.

"Different states take decisions on such matters based on their own circumstances and merits," he said, referring to the BJP-led West Bengal government's recent move to step up enforcement of cattle slaughter regulations under the state's 1950 law.

The minister acknowledged that demands for a complete ban on cow slaughter continue to be raised and are widely discussed, including on social media.

Call to declare cow national animal gets louder

While Hindu groups have been demanding the prohibition of cow slaughter in the country, several Muslim organisations and clerics have also called for declaring the cow the national animal and imposing a nationwide ban on cow slaughter. Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind chief Maulana Arshad Madani has been among those backing the demand, arguing that such a move could help reduce tensions surrounding the issue. Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari has also supported the proposal, saying if granting the cow national animal status could help address recurring disputes linked to cow slaughter, it should be considered.

EE SALA CUP NAMDU!

RCB seek rare title defence against GT

BENGALURU

Defending Indian Premier League (IPL) champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will square off against former winners Gujarat Titans (GY) in the IPL 2026 final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Sunday.

The toss will take place at 7 pm and the match will start from 7:30 pm.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru are chasing a second consecutive IPL title after storming into the final with a crushing 92-run win over Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 1.

Led by Rajat Patidar's unbeaten 93 off 33 balls, RCB posted 254/5 - the highest total in IPL playoff history - before bowling GT out for 162 in Dharamsala.

Patidar, who captained RCB to their maiden IPL title in 2025, now has the chance to join MS Dhoni and Rohit Sharma as the only captains to defend an IPL crown successfully.

Only two teams - Chennai Super Kings (2010 and 2011) and Mumbai Indians (2019 and 2020) - have successfully defended the IPL title to date.

RCB vs GT head-to-head

Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Gujarat Titans have faced each other nine times in IPL history. RCB hold the advantage in the head-to-head record with five wins against GT's four victories. The two teams have met each other three times this season with RCB winning two and GT coming out on top once - in their home fixture at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, incidentally also the venue for the final.

No public celebration in Bengaluru

Bengaluru City Police have officially banned all public celebrations, bike rallies, stunts, misuse of horns, and unapproved screenings following the IPL 2026 final to maintain law and order. Authorities also prohibited the bursting of crackers, public drinking, and road blockades across the city. Public are also advised not to share provocative posts, hateful messages, or rumours on social media. LED walls facing roads shall not be installed without prior permission and existing LED walls should not telecast the match. Screens must not be installed outside malls, pubs, or other establishments in a manner that makes them visible to the public for viewing the final. The restrictions are in place to ensure public safety and prevent tragedies, such as the stampede near the Chinnaswamy Stadium during previous celebrations.

QUICK READ

Karnataka HC gets 3 additional judges

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru: Karnataka high court has got three new additional judges, who were serving as judicial officers.They are Rajeshwari Narayana Hegde, who will be additional judge till March 17, 2028 (her superannuation date), Kedambadi Ganesh Shanthi and Brungesh Mahadevappa who will serve for two years, with effect from the date they assume charge.

Cop carries disabled man on shoulders amid rain

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Vehicular movement was temporarily restricted in many underpasses due to rain. Meanwhile, a traffic police constable, who demonstrated humanity along with his duty, has been widely praised on social media. The road near the Satellite Bus Stand in Bengaluru was completely flooded due to heavy rain. A disabled person was struggling to cross the road amidst the heavy traffic and rain. At this time, Anil, a constable of the Batarayanapura Traffic Police Station, who was managing traffic at the spot, carried the disabled person on his shoulders and crossed the road. Anil's act of rushing to the aid of the disabled person amidst the rain and traffic problems has won the hearts of the public. Anil's heartfelt work is being praised by the public and senior officers of the police department.

2 held for serving beef instead of mutton in restaurant

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A restaurant that was serving beef to customers in the name of mutton has been locked down. Serious allegations have been made against Kayaloram Restaurant located in Isiri Hub, Bommenahalli, Budigere Cross. The police of Avalahalli police station have arrested two people in this connection. The arrested have been identified as Jeeju and Shibu. This restaurant has been running under the name Kayaloram for the past one and a half years. A few days ago, a group of youths came to Kayaloram Restaurant for dinner and ordered mutton meals. The restaurant staff served them beef instead of mutton. The suspicious youths questioned the staff. They immediately informed the Avalahalli police. When the police arrived to investigate.

Silk Board Junction drowns again

Silk Board floods again as rains waterlog Bengaluru's worst junction. Garbage-choked drains, infrastructure work worsens snarls; pedestrians walk muddy paths.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru motorists are once again cursing Silk Board junction after heavy rains turned the area into a muddy, waterlogged mess, triggering massive traffic snarls despite the recent inauguration of the double-decker flyover. On Friday evening, torrential rain flooded the stretch near Silk Board Metro station, forcing vehicles to crawl through knee-deep water during peak hours, echoing a similar scene from Thursday.

The waterlogging issue at Silk Board is nothing new. Last May, pre-monsoon showers submerged the junction and even flooded the Metro station, with Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officials blaming Metro construction and blocked storm-water drains. A year later, commuters report little improvement,just 30 minutes of heavy rain on Thursday was enough to immobilise traffic for hours across Silk Board, Roopena Agrahara, Bommanahalli and surrounding national highway stretches.

According to officials, Silk Board receives rainwater from nearly 20 lakes, including Madiwala, and the existing stormwater drain network cannot handle the volume during intense rainfall. Compounding the problem, over 40 tonnes of garbage including plastic bottles, clothes and general waste have choked the drains. GBA chief engineer SV Rajesh confirmed that tonnes of waste were removed from drains near Silk Board, worsening flooding.

GBA has begun expanding the drain capacity from 1.5m to 3.5m using steel girders, with completion expected by June-end. An L-shaped culvert is being constructed to divert water toward HSR Layout. However, ongoing work has caused road closures and diversions, adding to commuter frustration. Officials also note that past infrastructure projects including the NHAI flyover, Metro construction and double-decker flyover pillars have disrupted natural drainage patterns.

The stormwater drain work has created safety hazards for pedestrians accessing the Yellow Line Metro station and BMTC bus stand. With no dedicated pedestrian pathway, commuters walk 300 metres on muddy, garbage-strewn roads.

Passenger Shubashree described it as both a safety and health hazard, while techie Karthik M blamed lack of civic sense and official apathy for the persistent mess.

Until drainage upgrades are completed and civic sense improves, Silk Board will remain Bengaluru's most cursed junction whenever rain falls.

The lack of civic sense among the people and the complete negligence of the authorities are the reason why Silk Board Junction has reached its present state, blamed a techie.

Rain havoc: Man killed after wall crashes on auto

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Heavy rain accompanied by strong winds on Friday evening turned fatal for an autorickshaw driver after a compound wall of a private club collapsed on his vehicle in West Bengaluru. According to the preliminary investigation by Vijayanagar police, Shivaboraiah, a resident of Gangondanahalli, had parked his autorickshaw by the roadside near Vijayanagar Club in Hampinagar when the incident occurred around 7.40pm. Amid heavy rain, the club's compound wall, estimated to be seven to eight feet high, suddenly collapsed. The massive wall reportedly fell on the parked auto, trapping Shivaboraiah inside. He was crushed between the mangled vehicle and the debris, and died on the spot. Shocked bystanders immediately alerted police, fire department, and emergency services personnel. Rescue teams rushed to the scene and began clearing the debris, but Shivaboraiah was already dead. A senior police officer said the victim's family had been informed. A case will be registered based on the complaint filed by the family.

Investigation is under way to ascertain what caused the wall to collapse. This is the second wall collapse incident being reported in the city in the last one month.

The wall collapse was one of several incidents reported from across the city as the downpour left a trail of disruption in many areas. Ahead of the likely advance of southwest monsoon over Karnataka, intense pre-monsoon thundershowers swept across central and southwest Bengaluru Friday evening, flooding major roads and junctions, uprooting trees, and throwing traffic out of gear.According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bengaluru city saw 46mm of rainfall while HAL airport area received 20.8mm till 8.30 pm. IMD officials said rain is likely to intensify in the coming days as monsoon strengthens over southern peninsula and is expected to advance further.

Will shoulder any responsibility given by party: Khandre

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Former Minister Ishwar Khandre said that he is a loyal party worker and is ready to take on any responsibility given by the party.

Speaking to reporters, he said that he had brought many reforms as the Municipal Administration Minister in the past and had worked hard for the party organization as the KPCC working president for 5 years during the coalition government and when the BJP was in power. He said that he is committed to the decision taken by the higher-ups.

Responding to a question asking if everyone has gone to Delhi, are you still here? He said that there is a legislative party meeting tomorrow evening, and the seniors have informed him that he will be in Bengaluru. Therefore, he said that he will be here and will meet the party seniors after the meeting tomorrow.

The Congress party has always recognized and given status to those who are loyal to the party and have worked efficiently.

I am currently the national president of the All India Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha and my community should get appropriate status. I hope that more MLAs should get representation in the cabinet.

Responding to a question about whether he would be eligible for the post of KPCC president, he said that he would work with body, speech, mind and dedication, no matter what responsibility the party gives him.

The former minister has expressed confidence that his work style, party loyalty, and efficiency and honesty will be appreciated and the party will give him more responsibility.

Your name is also being heard for the post of Deputy Chief Minister. Responding to the question whether you have made this demand before your superiors, Ishwar Khandre said that he does not know whether the superiors have decided on the post of DCM or not. However, he said that he has done a good job as the Minister of Forests, Biology and Environment for the last 3 years, has rejuvenated the department and has brought many reforms that were not done before.

Party leaders and people from different sections of society have expressed their appreciation for the work I have done as the Forest Minister. I am confident that my style of work, party loyalty and efficiency and honesty will be appreciated and the party will give me more responsibility, Ishwar Khandre said.

Temporary traffic restrictions at Lowry under-bridge near KR Puram for rly work

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In connection with the railway bridge slab replacement work being undertaken, temporary traffic diversions and road closures at Lowry Under Bridge near Krishnarajapuram will be in effect as detailed below. Commuters and road users are requested to plan their travel accordingly and use the alternative routes provided.

The road leading towards Krishnarajapuram, Ramamurthy Nagar and ITI Colony through Lowry Under Bridge will remain closed from June 4 to June 9.

Road users are advised to use the KR Puram Cable-Stayed Bridge to reach ITI Colony, Ramamurthy Nagar and Krishnarajapuram during this period.

The road leading towards ITPL/Whitefield through Lowry Under Bridge will remain closed from June 4 to June 9. Commuters may use the KR Puram Cable-Stayed Bridge to reach ITPL and Whitefield.

The road towards ITPL/Whitefield through KR Puram–ITPL Main Road will remain closed from 6.00 PM on June 7 to 6 AM on June 8. Road users are requested to use the diverted road provided near the Road Under Bridge (RUB) during the closure period.

The inconvenience caused due to these temporary traffic restrictions is regretted, as per release from Public Relations Officer of SWR.

Housebreak: 2 juveniles, 3 others held

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Jayanagar police claim to have cracked a housebreak case with the arrest of five accused, including two juveniles, and recovered eight expensive watches and other stolen valuables. The accused, Tousif (20), Syed Rafiq (22), Imamul (22) and the two 16-year-olds, are all residents of Tilak Nagar.

They allegedly burgled the residence of JET Bus Travels owner Syed Mohammed Akbar (55), in Jayanagar 4th T Block on the night of May 19. According to Akbar's complaint, he occasionally visited his old house to check on the property. On May 19, a neighbour alerted him that the front door of the house was open.

He found several valuables missing from the house, including Rs 20,000 in cash, eight branded watches, a gold-plated mobile phone, silver articles, a gold coin, and some bus parts.

B'luru police impose strict curbs ahead of RCB's IPL final

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

City Police have issued an advisory urging the public to avoid bursting crackers, holding road celebrations, creating disturbances or engaging in fights after the IPL 2026 final on May 31.The advisory was issued as Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) have reached the final of the TATA IPL 2026 cricket tournament. Police instructed the public to strictly follow safety guidelines and maintain peace across the city. According to the advisory, once the final result is announced, people should not engage in any kind of celebrations in public places. Police said maintaining law and order, public peace and safety is the responsibility of every citizen. The advisory also stated that LED walls facing roads should not be installed without prior permission from the concerned authorities. Existing LED walls have also been barred from telecasting the match. Police further said that screens should not be installed outside malls, pubs or other establishments in a manner that allows the public to watch the final from roads or public places. Bursting crackers and using dangerous materials is prohibited.

Peace and discipline must be maintained in crowded areas, the advisory stated.The police also urged citizens to strictly follow instructions issued by traffic officials. Bike rallies, over-speeding, stunts, misuse of horns and road blockages have been prohibited, according to the advisory. People have also been advised not to consume alcohol in public places or create disturbances, engage in fights or behave indecently. The advisory warned against sharing provocative posts, hateful messages or rumours on social media platforms. Under the pretext of the match result, fans of other teams should not be provoked, insulted, or engaged in behaviour that may lead to fights, the advisory stated. The IPL 2026 final will be held at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, which has a seating capacity of more than 1,30,000 spectators. The advisory comes in the backdrop of a stampede near Bengaluru's Chinnaswamy Stadium in June 2025, in which 11 people were killed and 33 others injured during RCB victory celebrations.

'Change is always good': Moily backs K'taka cabinet reshuffle

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Congress leader M Veerappa Moily said changes in the Karnataka Cabinet were necessary to help the party overcome anti-incumbency, adding that the induction of new faces would also create opportunities for aspiring legislators.

Moily said, change is always good, new faces will have to come, because there are a number of aspiring MLAs and MLCs who would like to serve in the Government, and even if Siddaramaiah were to continue as a Chief Minister, he would have made a change and all these Ministers would have continued. So, change is good for the Party, and people will also like.

The same Ministers and same faces will have an anti-incumbency issue. With the new faces coming into the Ministry, this will be resolved. He said, a refreshed Cabinet would help the government maintain public support and improve administrative efficiency under outgoing chief minister Siddaramaiah. On Rajya Sabha representation from Karnataka, Moily stressed the need for experienced leaders, saying the Congress must ensure effective representation at the national level.

We need very effective representation in the Rajya Sabha because now we are not in power in Delhi, but at the same time, we require people who can very effectively handle the situation on behalf of the Congress Party and the country. And for this, experience is necessary, and talent is also needed.

I think the High Command will consider all this, and they and the present Chief Minister will also consider all this experience and also the talent so that we can very effectively handle the issues on behalf of the state of Karnataka and also on behalf of the Congress at the Rajya Sabha platform, he stated.

Fire breaks out at school in city

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A fire broke out in the school building due to an electrical short circuit while classes were in progress at Chitrakoota Kaushalya School in Nagadevanahalli near Kengeri.

As the fire broke out on the 3rd and 4th floors of the school building, the teachers sent all the children outside.

Firefighters and Kengeri Police rushed to the spot and carried out operations to douse the fire. Fortunately, no one was injured. About 2,000 children study in this school. School started as usual at 9 am today.

Around 10:15 am, on Saturday, a fire broke out on the 4th floor of the school due to a short circuit.

The school staff immediately woke up and sent all the children outside. The flames of the fire have also spread to the 3rd floor.

A team of firefighters, who rushed to the spot with 4 vehicles, is currently engaged in the fire extinguishing operation.

FOLLOW SAFETY NORMS

IMD sounds heavy rain alert for Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Most districts under rain warning as Bengaluru braces for heavy showers over next 24 hours with lightning and gusty winds expected

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a widespread weather alert indicating rainfall activity across most parts of Karnataka, with the exception of five districts in North Karnataka. According to the forecast, the state is likely to witness active monsoon conditions with rain expected in the majority of districts.

A yellow alert has been declared for most districts across the state today. In addition, North Interior Karnataka districts will continue to remain under yellow alert until June 2, indicating the possibility of sustained rainfall activity over the coming days.

In Bengaluru and other South Interior Karnataka districts, a yellow alert has also been issued for today. The weather department has warned that the city is likely to receive rain towards the evening hours, with conditions becoming more active as the day progresses.

For coastal Karnataka, however, the forecast indicates comparatively lower chances of rainfall, with no significant heavy rain warning issued for the region at present.

Focusing on Bengaluru, the IMD has issued a fresh heavy rain alert for the city today. Over the next 24 hours, the city is expected to experience heavy rainfall activity, especially during the evening and night hours. Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are also likely during this period.

In addition to rainfall, gusty winds with speeds of 30–40 km/h are expected, which may add to weather-related disruptions in certain parts of the city.

QUICK READ

Hostel admissions open for Kushtagi students

Kushtagi

The Social Welfare Department is accepting online applications for student hostels in Kushtagi taluk for the 2026-27 academic year. Admissions have launched for pre-matric and post-matric boys' and girls' hostels across Kushtagi, Hanumasagar, Tavaragera, Dotihal, Kabbaragi, and Malagitti. Eligible students must apply online via www.sw.kar.nic.in using their SATS ID, mobile number, and caste, income, and identity certificates. After applying, students must submit printed applications, academic marks sheets, photographs, and verified certificate copies to their chosen hostels or the Assistant Director's office in Kushtagi to secure their residency.

National appreciation for disabled heroes and individuals

Koppal

The Central Government's Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is welcoming online nominations for the 2026-27 National Award for Persons with Disabilities. This honor rewards individuals and organizations demonstrating exceptional success in empowering disabled communities through education, sports, research, art, and rehabilitation. Winners will be celebrated on World Day of Persons with Disabilities this December 3. Candidates must apply in English via www.awards.gov.in by July 15, then submit duplicate physical copies locally. For complete eligibility criteria, visit www.depwd.gov.in or contact local panchayat welfare workers and the Koppal consultation center at 08539-295496.

Micro loan facility launched for street vendors

Gangavathi

The Gangavathi Municipal Corporation is inviting applications from local street vendors for a special micro-loan facility. Organized under the joint Central and State government initiative, the Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors Self-Reliance Fund Scheme, Lok Kalyan Melas will run citywide from June 1 to June 30 in partnership with local banks. During this month-long drive, local street vendors can visit urban local bodies to secure short-term loans of ₹15,000, ₹25,000, or ₹50,000. For guidance, applicants can contact the Municipal Corporation's Day-to-Day Department staff during regular office hours.

Koppal launches seed distribution via K-KISAN Software

The Koppal Agriculture Department has started distributing subsidized monsoon seeds using the new transparent K-KISAN software system

KOPPAL

The Koppal Agriculture Department has officially started distributing subsidized sowing seeds for the upcoming monsoon season. Local officials are urging all regional farmers to visit their nearest Farmer Contact Centers immediately to take full advantage of this government benefit.

To ensure total transparency, the government has launched a new software called K-KISAN. Under these strict new guidelines,

farmers must provide their unique Farmer Identification Number (FID) to purchase subsidized goods. This system limits urea distribution to exactly one bag per acre based on land size and crop type. Farmers without an FID must register immediately at local revenue offices, common service centers, or Gram One centers by submitting their basic land records and identification papers.

For direct purchases of seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides, farmers must visit authorized dealers. They are required to carry their official certificates, bank passbook, valid mobile number, passport-size photos, and caste certificates if applying under scheduled categories. The department stresses that getting an official bill for every purchase is absolutely mandatory.

Additionally, agricultural experts are advising farmers to adopt modern alternatives to manage shortages. The department highly recommends using Nano DAP as an effective substitute for traditional DAP fertilizer. Similarly, liquid Nano Urea is strongly encouraged as an excellent alternative to standard urea bags to boost crop yields this season.

Musalapur event raises awareness against child abuse

Musalapur's child abuse awareness program promoted the 1098 helpline, highlighted strict POCSO and child marriage laws, and explained safe, legal adoption options for parents

MUSALAPUR

A vital public awareness program focused on preventing child abuse was organized in Musalapur village. The event was a collaborative effort by the district administration, local police, child protection units, and the village panchayat.

During the session, Child Protection Officer Ravi Badigera urged residents to use the 1098 helpline to report any child in distress. He strongly warned against the cruel, illegal practice of abandoning unwanted infants in public spaces, which puts their lives at terrible risk. Badigera explained that parents can safely and legally surrender children to the District Child Welfare Committee for adoption. He assured the public that the government guarantees complete anonymity and confidentiality for these families.

Addressing legal protections, official Pratibha Kashimath highlighted the strict penalties under the amended POCSO Act. She explained that sexual offenses against minors carry a minimum of 20 years to lifetime imprisonment. Furthermore, verbal or physical harassment can lead to seven years in jail. Kashimath warned that anyone assisting or encouraging these crimes faces identical punishments.

The discussion also heavily focused on eradicating child marriage to improve health outcomes for young mothers and infants. Under state laws, marrying girls under 18 or boys under 21 is completely invalid and carries up to two years of prison time for anyone organizing or participating in the event.

Musalapur Gram Panchayat Administrator Abhilash presided over the meeting. Key local figures, including Medical Officer Dr. Anjum Taj and Panchayat Development Officer Nagesh Poojara, attended to show support.

Government Girls' Pre-University College hosted World Menstrual Hygiene Day to break social stigmas and promote scientific health awareness

College hosts world menstrual hygiene day event

KOPPAL

A vital health awareness program marking World Menstrual Hygiene Day was organized at the Government Girls' Pre-University College auditorium. The district administration, local health departments, and the college teamed up to launch the initiative under the global theme, "Together for a Menstruation-Friendly World."

District Health Education Officer Shivananda V.H.P. inaugurated the event, noting that despite massive advancements in technology, widespread social stigma around menstruation still persists. He emphasized the urgent need to replace traditional mindsets with scientific awareness,

highlighting the global goal to fully normalize menstruation by 2030.

Speakers provided the young students with highly practical medical guidance. Deputy Officer Devamma explained the five core principles of the menstrual cycle and safe waste disposal methods. Meanwhile, Field Officer K. Gangamma discussed the proper use of sanitary pads and menstrual cups, emphasized personal hygiene, and debunked common local superstitions. The session also educated students on nutritious diets, the HPV vaccine, and rabies control.

College Principal A.R. Shivananda presided over the function, praising the health department for delivering such essential information to young women. He actively urged the students to become health ambassadors and spread this vital knowledge within their own families and villages.

The successful event concluded with all participants taking a formal health pledge. District Coordinator Mehboobasaba Elahi hosted the program, while consultant Swarooprani expressed the final vote of thanks to the attending staff and students.

Shirahatti mandates 4 way waste segregation

SHIRAHATTI

Shirahatti Town Panchayat has issued an urgent public notice making it mandatory for all local residents to segregate their household waste into four distinct categories. The new rule aims to boost environmental protection and cleanliness. Garbage collection vehicles will no longer accept mixed waste under any circumstances.

According to the official guidelines, citizens must use a green bucket for wet waste, which includes biodegradable kitchen scraps, vegetables, and food remains. A blue bucket is designated for dry, recyclable materials like plastic, paper, cardboard, and metal items.

The policy requires extreme care for the remaining categories. Sanitary waste, such as used diapers and napkins, must be securely wrapped in newspaper, marked with red ink, and placed in a red bucket. Meanwhile, a brown bucket is reserved for hazardous special waste, including chemical cans, pesticides, CFL bulbs, medical waste, and old batteries.

Gadag DC orders crackdown on gambling

GADAG

Gadag Deputy Commissioner C.N. Sridhar has announced that the district administration will enforce strict legal actions against anyone involved in unauthorized lottery and illegal Matka gambling operations.

Presiding over a regional playing squad meeting for the fourth quarter at the District Administration Building, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed pending gambling cases currently under trial. He directed judicial and police officials to ensure these legal matters are disposed of swiftly. Additionally, Sridhar ordered Commercial Tax Department officers to investigate the financial assets and conditions of the accused individuals under existing GST regulations to take appropriate jurisdictional action.

During the meeting, DySP Mahantesh Sajjana reported that stringent crackdowns are already yielding positive results. He revealed that two major Matka accused were recently sentenced to official deportation to Vijayanagar district. The deported individuals include 21-year-old Basavaraja Doddamani from Mundargi and 58-year-old Virupakshappa Shettar from Shirahatti. Sajjana noted that because the district now automatically deports criminals involved in more than three gambling offenses, local Matka activities have drastically decreased.

The high-level meeting focused on maintaining absolute law and order across the region. Key department officials attended to coordinate the crackdown strategy, including Sridhar Chinagundi, Assistant Director of the Pension, Small Savings and Asset and Debt Management Department. Development Officer Nagaraj Uppara and Commercial Tax Department representative Rajashekariah Kalawadamath were also present to finalize enforcement protocols.

CONGRESS UNMINDED BY OPPOSITION POLITICS, SAYS JYOTI

KOPPAL

District Mahila Congress President Jyoti M. Gondabala issued a strong press statement, praising the state Congress government's leadership. She declared that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's mature administration continues to protect the party's public image while providing vital support to common citizens under the guidance of D.K. Shivakumar.

Gondabala noted that recent political moves by Siddaramaiah have greatly re-energized party workers. She stated that the opposition BJP was eagerly waiting for internal conflict to destabilize the ruling government. However, she emphasized that the Chief Minister's strategic steps have effectively shattered the BJP's hopes, securing a bright future for the Congress party.

In her critique, Gondabala dismissed the BJP's changing narratives regarding community leadership and the Chief Minister's post. She accused the opposition of exploiting backward community labels like OBC, SC, ST, and Ahinda strictly for political capital, without maintaining real morality. She urged the BJP to focus on its own internal party matters rather than dictating terms to the Congress.

Looking closely at local development, Gondabala highlighted a historic opportunity for Koppal district, which now holds two ministerial prospects. She expressed immense confidence in three-time MLA K. Raghavendra Hitnal's potential elevation to a ministerial post, citing his extensive leadership experience. Furthermore, she praised current Minister Shivaraj Thangadgi for efficiently managing the Kannada and Culture and Backward Classes Welfare departments, expressing high hopes that his impactful work for the region will continue uninterrupted.

Pre monsoon havoc: Haveri faces extensive damages

HAVERI

Severe pre-monsoon winds and heavy rains have left a trail of destruction across Haveri district, disrupting normal life and causing widespread damage. According to the district administration's latest report, the intense weather has severely impacted local communities, properties, and infrastructure.

Tragically, three human lives were lost during this pre-monsoon season. This includes two young boys who drowned in a lake in Hanagal taluk and another individual killed by a lightning strike in Ranebennur, with the government distributing ₹5.99 lakh in relief funds so far. Lightning strikes also claimed the lives of eight livestock animals across the region.

Property damage has been extensive, with 167 houses reported damaged, leaving many families distressed. The agricultural sector bore a massive brunt as volatile weather battered crop fields. While March and April saw initial horticulture and crop destruction, May witnessed an unprecedented surge.

Joint inspections confirmed that 680.36 hectares of farmland have been completely devastated, and data is being uploaded to the government portal for fast-tracking farmers' compensation.

Public infrastructure also took a massive hit, accumulating an estimated total loss of ₹1,177.63 lakh. High winds brought down 1,652 electricity poles and four transformers, causing power blackouts.

Additionally, four school and Anganwadi structures suffered structural damage. Government officials are working urgently to restore essential power lines and provide immediate relief to affected residents.

HAVERI BATTLES SEVERE SUMMER DRINKING WATER CRISIS

HAVERI

A harsh summer has triggered a severe drinking water crisis across Haveri district, forcing authorities to launch emergency relief operations. To ensure citizens do not go thirsty, the local administration is currently supplying clean drinking water to 56 affected villages through private tankers and rented private borewells.

According to the latest official update, the district management has deployed 16 water tankers to navigate parched terrains and deliver immediate relief to nine severely hit villages. Additionally, authorities have actively rented 59 private borewells to fulfill the daily water requirements of another 47 struggling neighborhoods.

The crisis has spread heavily across multiple sub-districts. In Ranebennur, four tankers and nineteen rented borewells are keeping dry taps running. Similarly, Byadgi relies on three tankers and nine rented borewells, while Hanagal utilizes two tankers and ten borewells. Haveri taluk is managing with two tankers and four borewells, Savanur has one tanker and seven borewells, and Shiggaon is supported by three tankers and four borewells. Meanwhile, Hirekerur and Ratteehalli taluks are currently managing solely through six rented borewells.

TRIPLE JAYANTI PREPARATIONS

District plans 3 upcoming Jayanti celebrations

KOPPAL

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sidrameshwar chaired a high-level preliminary meeting at the District Collector's Office. He strictly instructed department heads to finish all necessary preparations for the birth anniversaries of three iconic historical figures being Kempegowda, Dr. F. Gu Halakatti, and Hadapada Appanna.

The celebrations kick off simply on June 27 with Kempegowda Jayanti. Officials will hold a morning prayer ritual and pay respects to his portrait inside the District Collector's hall.

Following this, Dr. F. Gu Halakatti Jayanti will take place on July 2. The day begins with a formal wreath-laying ceremony at Halakatti Circle on Kushtagi Road. Afterward, the Government Pre-University College auditorium will host a main stage

event featuring traditional prayers and educational lectures.

The largest event, Hadapada Appanna Jayanti, is scheduled for July 29. A grand morning cultural procession carrying Appanna's portrait will march from the Akkamahadevi temple to Sahitya Bhavan. A stage program with special lectures will follow immediately after the parade ends.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner ordered municipality workers to thoroughly clean all procession paths, circles, and venues beforehand. He also made it mandatory to provide clean drinking water for attendees. Furthermore, he directed all local schools, colleges, and Gram Panchayats to host individual celebrations. Kannada and Culture Department Assistant Director Karnakumar, along with prominent community leaders like Mounesh and Manjunath Handral, attended the meeting to pledge their full cooperation.

QUICK READ

Student concession allowance applications now open

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

The state's ED-1A Division has launched the student concessionary allowance distribution process for the 2026-27 academic year. Local degree holders can apply online via the official state government website. Applicants must secure an official certificate verifying their name, birthdate, and academic year. The Block Education Officer has directed students at Thachi District School to obtain these documents immediately. Registration counters are open at the Thachiri District Office and Chitwan Port for unregistered students. For inquiries, applicants can call 87926 62814 or 8792662816.

Mundargi model school hiring guest teachers

CH NEWS, Mundargi

The Minority Welfare Department is inviting applications for guest teacher positions at Maulana Azad Model School in Mu ndargi for the 2026-27 academic year. The institution is seeking qualified educators to teach English, Hindi, Social Science, Urdu, and Physical Education. Eligible candidates possessing a B.Ed. degree in the relevant subject must submit their acade mic records to the school, located near the B.Ed. College in Byalwadagi, Mundargi. The deadline for physical document submission is June 4. For further details, applicants can directly contact the Headmaster of Maulana Azad Model School at 9844288513.

Cash rewards offered for building home toilets

CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPUR

Local officials are urging rural families without proper sanitation to apply for new government toilet subsidies. To clean up villages, the Swachh Bharat Mission is offering cash incentives directly to homeowners. General applicants will receive 12,000, while Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe households will get 20,000. The funds will drop into bank accounts in two installments after construction. To qualify, you must own a ration card, have a linked mobile number, and never have used this scheme before. Interested residents can apply online or visit their local Gram Panchayat with their bank passbook and ID today.

Holalu storm causes lakhs in property damage

A severe storm in Holalu village destroyed a house roof and interior, causing damage estimated up to 3 lakh

HOLALU

A severe storm featuring heavy wind and rain wreaked havoc in Holalu village, causing property damage estimated between ₹2 lakh and ₹3 lakh.

The violent weather ripped off the roof of a house belonging to Pushpa, wife of Basavaraj. The destruction escalated when the property's overhead water tank collapsed through the broken roof and crashed directly into the living quarters. The impact severely damaged the interior walls and completely ruined household electronics, kitchen appliances, and furniture, including the family couch and television set. Fortunately, no injuries or casualties were reported as no one was inside the house when the collapse occurred.

Following the incident, Village Administrator C. Gunasekhar visited the site to inspect the structural damage and speak with the affected family members. He confirmed that a detailed report has been forwarded to senior officials to expedite government compensation. Gram Panchayat Vice President Jayaprakash Narayan also visited the scene, promising the family dedicated state assistance and resources to help rebuild their home.

Staffing crisis hits Bantwal government schools

BANTWAL

A severe teacher shortage is currently crippling government primary schools across Bantwal taluk, exposing a massive gap between public policy and ground reality. Despite official promises to strengthen public education, rural schools continue to struggle without adequate permanent staff just as the new academic year begins.

Startling official figures reveal that twenty-eight primary schools in the region have zero full-time teachers. Meanwhile, twenty-one institutions are functioning with only a single teacher managing all students. Key administrative roles, including headmaster positions, also remain vacant. This forces temporary guest teachers to handle complex administrative duties alongside daily classroom teaching, creating a severe structural imbalance.

According to the Bantwal Block Education Office, there are currently 373 vacant primary school teaching posts. With twenty more staff members retiring shortly, this shortage will soon spike to 393. Local officials have requested 393 guest teachers to maintain basic academic continuity. High schools are facing similar subject-specific vacancies, causing parents to worry and consider moving their children to private alternatives.

Karwar CRIMS organizes free rural health camp

KARWAR

A massive free health camp organized by the Karwar Institute of Medical Sciences (CRIMS) was successfully held at the Angadi Primary Health Center. Spearheaded by the CRIMS Community Medical Department, the collaborative weekend initiative provided crucial medical support to rural residents.

The camp was officially inaugurated by Dr. Purnima R. T., the Dean and Director of CRIMS. A total of 210 rural beneficiaries attended the event to take advantage of the free medical services. Specialist doctors representing twelve different departments from

Karwar CRIMS provided expert consultations, diagnoses, and treatments. They also offer ed health education and vital re ferral services for patients requ iring advanced follow-up care.

This extensive health camp was organized under the National Medical Commission's "Family Adoption Programme" for MBBS students. This innovative curriculum requires medical students to adopt local families to deeply understand their healthcare needs and social determinants of health. The CRIMS MBBS students actively participated by encouraging their adopted families to attend, ensuring they received specialist care.

Several prominent medical figures attended the event, including CRIMS Medical Superintendent Dr. Naresh Pawaskar, Community Medicine Head Dr. Hemagiri K., and Resident Medical Officer Dr. Vijayaraj N. Angadi Health Center Medical Officer Dr. Sudeetha Pedeker was also present alongside dedicated laboratory technicians, nurses, and volunteers. Dr. Malatesh Uchidi compered the program, and Dr. Girish H. O concluded the event by proposing the vote of thanks.

Direct pay for rural staff soon

BANTWAL

Karnataka is launching a major administrative reform to credit gram panchayat employees' salaries directly into their bank accounts. This historic move aims to end chronic payment delays that have long plagued rural staff.

Nearly 51,000 approved panchayat workers across the state will benefit from this updated direct payment system. Funds will now flow straight from State Finance Commission grants to workers' accounts, removing local intermediaries. To kickstart this process, officials are currently linking employee accounts with verified data in the Panchatantra 2.0 HRMS module.

Previously, the government released salary funds only

Karnataka is launching a direct bank payment system for 51,000 gram panchayat workers, ending chronic salary delays and removing local intermediaries for greater financial security.

three times a year into dedicated panchayat accounts. This system caused severe disruptions, as local offices often diverted the cash for other village expenses, leaving staff unpaid for months. Meanwhile, higher-ranking rural officials like secretaries and accountants have enjoyed regular, timely monthly payments through taluk treasuries.

Beyond fixing schedules, the direct transfer shift will streamline provident fund and ESI deductions. However, the Gram Panchayat Employees' Association has raised a few concerns. Union leaders are now asking the state for clear guidelines regarding these statutory deductions and the extra local allowances they previously received.

Government authorities confirmed that digital integration is actively underway. Full implementation is expected very soon, promising transparency and financial security for the backbone of rural administration.

Veteran artist Vasantha Gowda Kayarthadka was celebrated at Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala for completing fifty-one years in Yakshagana.

Vasantha Gowda honored at Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala

BELTHANGADY

Traditional performing artist Vasantha Gowda Kayarthadka was celebrated at Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala for completing an incredible fifty-one years with a single Yakshagana troupe. Edaneer Mutt seer Sri Sachidananda Bharathi Swamiji inaugurated the golden jubilee event at Amritavarshini Hall, praising Gowda's lifelong dedication. The seer noted that maintaining loyalty to one troupe for five decades reflects a rare level of discipline in coastal Karnataka's cultural art scene.

Dharmasthala troupe administrator D. Harshendra Kumar called dedicated performers the true assets of any cultural group. He remarked that artists rarely show the willingness to adapt or improve their roles, making Gowda's lifelong readiness to perform any assigned character exceptionally admirable.

Several other notable figures attended the grand celebration, including Human Rights Commission chairman Dr. T. Shyama Bhat and hotel entrepreneur Krishnamurthy Manj. Fellow artists, disciples, and various cultural teams joined together to honour Vasantha Gowda and his wife, Geetha, for their immense contribution to the field.

In his emotional felicitation speech, Gowda recalled his five-decade artistic journey. He described his experiences working alongside senior performers, the strict discipline required, and the steady support of troupe leadership as his most unforgettable memories.

The memorable event was compered by artist Ujire Ashok Bhat, and troupe manager Girish Hegde concluded with a vote of thanks. The celebration featured special performances by Gowda's disciples, a unique showcase by child artists, and a live Yakshagana demonstration by the veteran artist himself.

Leader backs Zameer Khan for Deputy CM

KOLAR

In the midst of ongoing discussions over Karnataka's leadership, local cooperative leader Shabbir Ahmed has appealed to the Congress high command to appoint senior leader B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan as Deputy Chief Minister. Ahmed, Vice-President of a silk growers and farmers society in Srinivaspur, issued a statement strongly backing the former minister.

Ahmed emphasized that Khan is not a leader confined to any specific caste or religion. Instead, he is widely recognized as a mass leader with broad support among minorities, backward classes, and Dalits across Ka rnataka. Having served the party for years with dedication, Khan has earned a reputation for successfully executing every responsibility assigned by top leadership.

The statement highlighted Khan's vital role in mobilising party workers and energising election campaigns during recent Karnataka by-elections, which contributed significantly to Congress's success. Furthermore, Ah med noted Khan's successful national deployment duri ng the recent 2026 Kerala Assembly elections, where he worked in support of the Congress-led UDF alliance.

SDO Kantharaj inspires hostel staff at workshop

CHITRADURGA

Sub-Divisional Officer Dr. K.J. Kantharaj urged student hostel cooks, helpers, and guards to build high morale and work with complete honesty. He was speaking after inaugurating a one-day rehabilitation workshop organized by the Social Welfare Department at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Government Post-Matric Girls' Hostel.

Dr. Kantharaj highlighted that kitchen staff play a massive role in shaping a student's future. Sharing his emotional personal experience, he recalled staying in a government hostel from sixth standard until his master's degree. He credited his current success to his old hostel cooks who woke him up at 4:00 AM daily to study.

Addressing the rising unemployment problem, the officer noted that even highly educated individuals with engineering and doctoral degrees are currently applying for basic kitchen positions. Given this fierce competition, he advised outsourced workers to respect their jobs and serve as disciplined role models for young students.

Assistant Director of the Social Welfare Department O. Parameshwarappa stated that preparations for the upcoming 2026–27 academic year are already fully underway. Hostels are being thoroughly cleaned, and staff will welcome returning students with sweet treats. He emphasized that biometric systems require workers to arrive by 6:00 AM, noting that salaries have been deposited regularly by the fifth of every month alongside newly provided health benefits.

The informative safety workshop also featured critical training from Fire Station Officer Narendra regarding kitchen fire safety equipment and gas cylinder leakage prevention. Multiple district labor, health, and union officials attended the event.

Prof. Raju Alaguru takes Welfare Director post

VIJAYAPURA

In an official administrative move, state leaders have formally appointed Professor Raju Alaguru as the chief director for regional welfare. The highly anticipated announcement was shared publicly during a commemorative gathering held at the Rajarajeshwari Kandy Memorial Park. Prominent state police commandants, district officers, and local community leaders attended the event to pay their respects to past leaders and welcome the incoming administration.

During the assembly, legal representatives from the District Magistrate's Court, led by Senior First Judge Arvind Thagar, processed the administrative notices required to finalize this new leadership transition. Returning officers expressed deep optimism about the future of the department under the professor's guidance, noting that strategic structural changes will significantly improve the efficiency of local governance and community development programs. Organizers also highlighted the profound cultural and social responsibilities that come with this leadership role. Speakers at the event emphasized that a successful leadership path functions like a guiding light, paving the way for public success, harmony, and long-term societal well-being.

The high-profile ceremony concluded with widespread messages of support and solidarity from various regional organizations.

Udupi deploys massive 600 camera network

UDUPI

The Udupi police department has announced an extensive surveillance expansion plan to strengthen security, monitor illegal activities, and catch traffic violations across the district. Under this new initiative, 650 high-tech CCTV cameras will be installed across approximately 210 carefully identified public locations.

Officials stated the project is designed to ensure continuous monitoring through a centralized control system operated dir ectly from police headquarters. This upgrade is expected to enhance overall policing efficien cy and ensure faster crime detec tion. Currently, only 220 ca mer as operate across 60 locations, funded largely by the local Cha mber of Commerce and private donors. The central government has already allocated ₹5 cr ore for this massive expansion, official tenders will soon be floated to cover the first 126 locations.

Ten foot snake rescued from judge's home

RAMANAGAR

In a swift and successful wildlife rescue operation, environmentalist and reptile expert B. Shashikumar safely captured a massive ten-foot-long pond snake that had entered a judge's home. The non-venomous reptile was later released unharmed into the forest area at the foot of Ramadevara Hill.

The snake was discovered inside the Shanthinagar Layout residence of Savita P.R., a Senior Civil Judge and Member Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority. The unexpected visitor caused immediate shock and panic among the family members.

A passing car driver had originally spotted the large reptile entering the house and quickly alerted the residents. The snake moved through the bedroom, wrapped around the refrigerator, and eventually sought shelter inside the prayer room.

CLASSROOMS RACE AGAINST STORMS

Storms damage 7 schools before reopening

MOODABIDIRI

Severe pre-monsoon winds and heavy rains have damaged seven local schools just days before the new academic year begins. As institutions rush to prepare for reopening, multiple schools are now struggling with sudden infrastructure issues, including leaky roofs, cra cked walls, and broken doors.

Local education officials have already submitted an urgent proposal to the district administration. They are requesting an emergency grant

of ₹2 lakh for each of the ten schools requiring immediate structural repairs. Heavy storm damage has been reported in several areas, including Kolloli, Varnabetta, Padukonaje, Gajigarapalke, Jyotinagar, and Kallabettu.

Because this coastal region routinely experiences severe thunderstorms and fierce winds during the monsoon, authorities fear further destruction. Potential hazards include collapsing compound walls and se vere drainage blockages on sc hool grounds. In fact, the very first rains have already triggered water seepage and weakened old school structures.

Officials stated they are actively preparing safety checks for school buildings, electrical wiring, drainage networks, and surrounding walls. Despite these plans, teachers and parents remain deeply concerned about whether these vital repairs can be finished before the fast-approaching school schedule officially starts.

Meanwhile, emergency repair work has already commenced in numerous local institutions. Impacted locations get ting immediate attention inclu de Pranthya, Nellikaru, Handelu, Pucchemogaru, Kariyanangadi, Moodubettu, Makki, Beluvai Main, Dharegudde, Mantra dey, Neerkere, Gandhinagar, Kote Bagilu, Mijaru Gov ernme nt School, KPES Mijaru, and Hosabettu High School. Author ities hope to ensure student safe ty before classrooms reopen.

QUICK READ

Caregiver assistance for disabled children open in koppal

CH NEWS, KOPPAL
The Koppal Municipal Corporation is inviting applications for financial assistance to help caregivers of children with mental retardation and multiple disabilities. Funded under the municipality's 2026-27 SFC Open Fund Grant scheme, this program supports eligible urban families. Interested caregi vers must submit their official requests at the Koppal Municipality Office before the June 15 deadline. Applicants must attach city residency proof, income/caste certificates, medical disability docume nts, recent photos, and co pies of their ration card, identification, and bank pa ssbook. Late or incomple te submissions will be automatically rejected, the Municipal Commissioner stated.

Singatalur Canal repairs might delay monsoon water

CH NEWS, Singatalur
The Karnataka Irrigation Corporation urges local farmers to arrange alternative water sources this monsoon due to ongoing canal repairs. Heavy rains last year damaged a key box culvert bridge along the Mundaragi branch canal. While restoration work is moving at full swi ng, it remains unfinished. Consequently, water supply may face heavy disrup tions during the 2026-27 agricultural season. Growers in Mundargi taluk villages including Basapura, Tamragundi and Koppal taluk areas like Kavalur and Alavandi must plan alternative irrigation. Officials request farmers to di versify crop planning and cooperate until structural repairs conclude safely.

Surgical aid for SC, ST Communities open

CH NEWS, KOPPAL
The Koppal Municipal Corporation is accepting applications for medical financial assistance from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe residents. Funded under the 24.10 percent welfare scheme for the 2026-27 fiscal year, this initiative offers a 40 percent surgical subsidy to eligible patients. To qualify, individuals must be permanent residents of Koppal city and submit their requests directly to the Koppal Municipality Office. Applicants have until June 15 to submit their documents, including recent caste and income certificates, official hospital bills, medical records, passport photos, and identity verification. Late or incomplete submissions will be rejected.

Udupi infrastructure holds strong against heavy rains

Udupi district escaped major damage and casualties despite experiencing widespread, mild rainfall across all taluks over twenty-four hours.

UDUPI

In a major relief to coastal residents, Udupi district has escaped any major damage or casualties despite experiencing widespread rainfall over the last twenty-four hours. According to the official preliminary situation report released by the district administration, no rain-related mishaps, injuries, or property damages have been recorded anywhere across the region.

Local authorities confirmed that human lives, livestock, and homes remain completely safe, with zero reports of house collapses or structural distress. Furthermore, critical infrastructure has held up remarkably well. There are no reports of disrupted road connectivity, breached lake bunds, or major power supply failures. Major water reservoirs and dams also remain well within safe limits, showing normal inflow and outflow patterns.

While the daily routine of citizens was mildly disrupted by wet weather, the overall impact remains harmless. Because no residential areas faced flooding, the administration did not need to evacuate citizens or open temporary relief centers. Crop fields and household belongings are also safe from harm.

The region, however, did record varying intensities of showers. Kaup received the highest rainfall at 15.6 mm, followed by Udupi town at 9.8 mm. Karkala recorded 5.8 mm, Brahmavar saw 5.5 mm, Byndoor registered 1.0 mm, Kundapura had 0.9 mm, and Hebri experienced a minor 0.5 mm of rain. The average rainfall across all taluks stands at a gentle 4.0 mm. Officials continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure public safety as the wet spell persists.

Basava Nagar celebrated Bakrid with devotion

Basava Nagar celebrated Bakrid with devotion as speakers emphasized the festival's message of peace, ultimate sacrifice, and building a harmonious community through helping the poor.

VIJAYAPURA

The holy festival of Bakrid was celebrated with immense joy and devotion at Basava Nagar on Buranpur Road. The event highlighted the core values of Islam, focusing on the powerful message of peace, charity, and brotherhood.

Speaking at the gathering, prominent local lawyer Danesh Avati emphasized that Bakrid is much more than just a celebration. He explained that it stands as a true symbol of ultimate sacrifice, deep faith in God, and pure humanity. According to Avati, the festival teaches people the importance of obeying spiritual values, supporting one another, and feeding the poor and hungry.

Maulana Muhammad Asfaq, who guided the event, added that Bakrid strengthens the bonds of love and unity in society. By actively helping needy and suffering citizens, people can build a more peaceful and harmonious community. He urged everyone to embrace these celebrations to help the entire human race progress.

The program was hosted by Mashaka Karjagi, president of the Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Social Service Committee. Karjagi thanked the elders, teachers, and enthusiastic youth of Basavanagar for their constant support in organizing community welfare events. He promised that more positive, creative activities would be planned for the neighborhood soon.

The memorable event began with a beautiful Quran recitation by Salim Hipparagi. Bhashasab Chaudhary warmly welcomed the guests, and Hussain Saab Konabi concluded the function by thanking everyone. Local leaders like Muktumsab Chapparband and Abdul Hamid Panawale also attended to share their festive joy.

The Kalaburagi Local Centre of IEI celebrated World Telecommunication Day, emphasizing resilient digital networks during emergencies, disasters.

Engineers celebrated World Telecommunication day

KALABURAGI

The Institution of Engineers (India), Kalaburagi Local Centre, celebrated World Telecommunication and Information Society Day at the Visvesvaraya Bhavan seminar hall. This year's event centered on the timely theme, "Digital Lifelines – Strengthening Resilience in a Connected World."

The main objective of the program was to raise public awareness about the vital role communication technology plays during major disasters and emergencies. Dr. Feroza D. Mirajkar, an Assistant Professor from KBN University, delivered an insightful theme talk. She explained that digital

networks have become absolute essentials for everyday services like healthcare, education, banking, and governance.

Dr. Mirajkar warned that wars and natural disasters can easily destroy these networks, deeply disrupting society. To prevent this, she stressed the urgent need for robust backup systems that remain functional during crises. Additionally, she highlighted how cybersecurity, strict data protection, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are crucial to maintaining non-stop connectivity and boosting national development.

The event commenced beautifully with an invocation song by Dr. Prakash Pattan from the IEI Music Club. Er. Kakkeri Chandrashekar, Chairman of the Kalaburagi Local Centre, warmly welcomed the gathering, while Prof. Rajkumar introduced the keynote speaker.

The successful program was organized under the expert gui dance of Technical Sub- Committee Convener Dr. Visha ldatt Kohir and was smoothly compered by Prof. Akshata Shah. To close the event, Honorary Secretary Prof. Udayshan kar Bellary expressed a sincere vote of thanks to the attending engineers, teachers, students, and executive committee members.

Water supply halted for 2 days in Chitradurga

CHITRADURGA

Citizens will experience a temporary disruption in their drinking water supply on May 31 and June 1. The two-day shutdown is necessary to execute essential mai ntenance work on the Shantisagar Water Supply Project, which serves as the primary water source for Chitra durga city. To manage this shortage, local municipal au thorities have urged residen ts to utilize alternative water sources, including area tube wells and local clean drinking water filtration units.

Talent award show set for top students

VIJAYAPURA

The Vijayapura district unit of the Akhil Karnataka Jangam Kshemabhivriddhi Mahasabha will host a grand talent award and felicitation ceremony on 31st May. The event is specially organized to honor local students who achieved exceptionally high marks in their SSLC and II PUC examinations.

The ceremony will begin at 11:00 AM at the Sri Pavada Basaveshwara Temple's Mangala hall, located in Bendigeri Galli near the historic Gol Gumbaz. Respected spiritual leaders Sri Chennamallikarjuna Shivacharya Swami of Nagathana Udayeshwara Math and Sri Abhinava Rachoteswara Shivacharya Swami of Tadavalagad Rachoteswara Hiremath will grace the occasion with their divine presence.

Sanjeev Hiremath, the president of the district unit, will preside over the function. A distinguished panel of chief guests will attend, including Jamkhandi MLA Nadoja Jagadish Gudagunti, alongside School Education Department officials Veeraiah Salimath and Rachaiah Ganachari. Prominent social thinkers and community donors, such as Shambuligayya Karpoormath and Shivanand Shastisgal Hir emath, will also be present on stage to encourage the youth.

Sangha Secretary S.K. Savalagi Math issued a press statement requesting all the student applicants and their parents to arrive at the venue on time. The organization has warmly invited members of the public and community elders to attend the celebration in large numbers to bless the young achievers and support their future educational journeys.

Subsidy applications open for Gadag farmers

GADAG

The Department of Information and Public Relations has announced that the Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture in Mundaragi is now officially inviting applications for various agricultural subsidy schemes for the 2026–27 fiscal year.

Financial assistance is being offered under the National Integrated Horticulture Development Mission (NIHDM) to help farmers expand new cultivation areas. The subsidy covers a wide variety of crops, including brown banana, Indian banana, papaya, fig, pomegranate, mango, guava, tamarind, and lemon. It also applies to hybrid vegetables, spices, medicinal plants, and flowers like chrysanthemum, marigold, and jasmine. Additionally, funding is available for farm infrastructure, including agricultural pits, plastic covers, bird-repellent nets, and weed patches.

Subsidies are also open under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) for drip irrigation systems and oil palm cultivation. These benefits are strictly categorized and available for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and General Category farmers based on specific state guidelines. To apply, interested farmers must submit their official application form along with a copy of their Aadhaar card.

Fishermen warned of dangerous sea conditions

UDUPI

The Ministry of Home Affairs has issued a critical five-day weather warning for fishermen across India's coastal re gions due to incoming turbulent weather. Severe squally conditions and powerful winds are expected to trigger rough seas, making maritime operations highly hazardous.

In the Arabian Sea, intense winds ranging from 45 to 55 kmph, with aggressive gusts peaking at 65 kmph, will impact the northern waters and regions along the Gujarat coast. Simultaneously, a separate weather system over the southern Arabian Sea, Kerala coast, and around the Lakshad weep and Maldives islands will trigger heavy squalls with wind speeds fluctuating betwe en 35 and 50 kmph, gusting up to 60 kmph over the next few days.The Bay of Bengal is facing an equally turbulent spell. Rough weather with per sist ent wind speeds of 40 to 50 kmph, gusti ng up to 60 kmph, is predicted around the Gulf of Mannar, Comorin ar ea, along the coasts of Tamil Nadu, An dhra Pra desh, and Sri Lanka.

Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun reviews agriculture supplies

DAVANAGERE

With the monsoon season officially underway, Davanagere MP Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun has directed agriculture officials to ensure an uninterrupted and timely supply of high-quality seeds and fertilizers to local farmers.

Chairing a comprehensive review meeting with the Joint Director of the Agriculture Department at her residence, Dr. Mallikarjun took stock of current inventory levels, distribution channels, and seasonal storage capacities. She emphasized that because farmers have already begun crucial sowing operations across the district, the administration must remain highly vigilant to prevent any artificial shortages or distribution bottlenecks.

The MP instructed department heads to proactively manage government agricultural welfare programs so that

benefits, subsidies, and modern equipment reach eligible farmers without procedural delays.

Furthermore, the meeting featured detailed discussions on introducing modern, technology-based farming methods to local growers. Dr. Mallikarjun highlighted that adopting improved agricultural practices is essential to lower overall cultivation costs, boost crop productivity, and ultimately increase farmers' net income. She concluded by urging all departmental officials to work with close coordination, keeping the welfare and financial security of the farming community as their top priority.

Anti-tobacco rally to mark World No Tobacco Day in Haveri

HAVERI

A grand awareness rally (Jatha) will be organized on June 1, at 10:00 AM to mark World No Tobacco Day. The initiative is a collaborative effort by the District Legal Services Authority, District Court, District Panchayat, Dis trict Administration, Police Department, Department of Information and Public Relations, and the District Health and Family Welfare Department's Tobacco Control Cell. The event will be held at the Haveri District Hospital pre mises. Princi pal District and Sessions Ju dge and Chairman of the District Legal Services Authority, Biradar Devindra ppa N., will officially inaugurate the awareness program. Senior District Judge and Member Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority, Smt. Shailaja H.V., along with District Judicial Committee Chairman Danagouda H.L., will grace the occasion as chief guests.

Koppal Seer to launch Kalidasa Committee's silver jubilee

GADAG

District Youth Congress Committee President Krishna Patil announced that the city's Sri Kalidasa Education Committee will mark its 25th anniversary with 25 distinct community wel fare programs. The year-long silver jubilee celebrations are scheduled to be officially launched on June 7, 2026, by the highly revered Sri Gavisiddheshwara Swamiji of Koppal.

Speaking at a preliminary planning meeting held at the Devaraj Urs Hostel office, Patil proposed that the committee identify and honor 25 top achievers from across the district who have excelled in music, culture, and art.

CITU STAGES MEGA PROTEST

Labor group demands higher minimum wages now

VIJAYAPURA

Members of the Center of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) staged a protest outside the District Collector's office, sub mitting a formal petition addressed to the Chief Minister. The workers are demanding a monthly minimum wage of Rs. 36,000, changes to state labor codes, and permanent legal protections for contract laborers.

CITU District Coordinator Lakshman Handral acknowledged the state government's

May 22 notification, which streamlined wages into three uniform zones to benefit over one crore workers. However, Handral argued that the current hike fails to meet historical Supreme Court standards adjusted for today's high cost of living. The group also strongly condemned recent central agency actions targeting former Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Co-Convenor Suresh G.B. pointed out major flaws in the current policy. He explained that by implementing the new wages from May 2026 instead of retroactively from April 2025, the government has unfairly deprived workers of ma ssive back-pay arrears.

Furthermore, the union expressed deep anger over the exclusion of 19 major industries, including garments, bidi, and handlooms. Leaders emphasized that this exclusion directly hurts a massive population of underpaid women workers and scheme employees who deserve immediate coverage.

The union warned the state government to strictly enforce the revised wage orders and resist any intense pressure from corporate employers.

Prominent union leaders, including Narayana Badigera, Lal Ahmed Sheikh, and several representatives from the Gram Panchayat Employees' Association, attended the protest to show their solidarity.

Hosadurga Health Officer warns against dengue

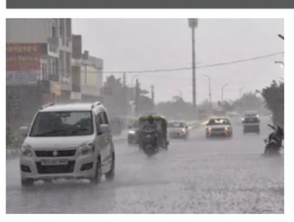
CHITRADURGA

Hosadurga Taluk Health Officer Dr. Raghavendra Prasad stated that while mosquitoes are small insects, the public health threat they pose is massive. Speaking at a recently org anized "National Dengue Day" program at the Belaguru Community Health Center, he emphasized that controlling the disease requires a joint effort from the health departme nt, various government bodies, and the general public.

Highlighting this year's core prevention slogan "Check, Cle an and Cover" Dr. Prasad educated villagers on identifying early dengue symptoms and maintaining strict hygiene arou nd water storage.

He noted that thanks to ongoing inter-departmental collaboration and rising public awareness, the total nu mber of dengue cases across the taluk is currently on the decline. The health awareness event featured active participation from local medical officers Dr. Sahana, Dr. Suma, and Dr. Kripakar.

QUICK READ



IMD issues thunderstorm, rain alert in Rajasthan

CH NEWS, Jaipur
A strong Western Disturbance continues to influence weather conditions across Rajasthan, bringing thunderstorms, squalls and rainfall to several parts of the state. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the weather pattern is expected to persist over the next four to five days, providing continued relief from intense heatwave conditions. Over the past 24 hours, thunderstorms and rainfall were recorded in several districts. The highest rainfall, 58 mm, was reported in Bari of Dholpur district.

NBA realises Rs 21 cr as benefit sharing in FY26

CH NEWS, New Delhi
The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) realised Rs 21.26 crore under the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism during the financial year 2025–26, an official said on Saturday. The amount was generated from approvals granted for research, commercial utilisation, intellectual property rights, bio-survey and bio-utilisation of biological resources, reflecting growing industry participation in India's biodiversity governance framework, the official said in a statement. During the period, the seed sector emerged as the largest contributor, accounting for Rs 11.75 crore, followed by the AYUSH sector with Rs 5.56 crore, said the statement.

Bay of Bengal nations adopt AI for fisheries

CH NEWS, Mumbai
Countries bordering the Bay of Bengal are increasingly turning to artificial intelligence (AI) as a powerful tool to strengthen fisheries governance, combat illegal fishing, and ensure the long-term sustainability of marine resources that support millions of livelihoods across the region. Senior policymakers, fisheries administrators, and marine experts from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives met in Mumbai for a high-level policy dialogue hosted by India to explore how AI can transform fisheries management in one of the world's most productive marine ecosystems. Organised by the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO), the meeting focused on identifying pra ctical AI applications and developing a regional roadmap for technology-enabled fisheries governance.

WB offers door-step service to fill 'Annapurna' forms

West Bengal government will assist beneficiaries at home to complete Annapurna Yojana applications without difficulty

KOLKATA

Amid growing speculation regarding the complexity of the 12-page application form for the Annapurna Yojana, West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Saturday sought to reassure beneficiaries by announcing that government staff would visit homes to help eligible women complete the enrollment process.

The Chief Minister made the statement while speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the inauguration of a cervical cancer vaccination camp in Bidhannagar, located on the outskirts of Kolkata. He emphasized that there was no reason for beneficiaries to be concerned about the application procedure and urged people not to believe rumors circulating about the scheme.

The Annapurna Yojana provides a monthly financial allowance of Rs 3,000 to eligible women across the state. According to Adhikari, the government is committed to ensuring that all deserving beneficiaries receive the financial support without facing unnecessary hurdles.

Addressing concerns over the lengthy application form, the Chief Minister said government representatives would personally visit households to assist women in completing the paperwork. He reiterated that eligible recipients would not be deprived of the benefits due to procedural difficulties.

There is no need to pay attention to speculation or misinformation regarding the application process. The government will ensure that every genuine beneficiary receives the financial assistance, Adhikari said. He also stressed that strict verification measures would be implemented to prevent ineligible individuals from receiving benefits under the scheme.

The Chief Minister further announced that the first phase of fund disbursement under the Annapurna Yojana would begin on June 3. The financial assistance will be transferred directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries through a direct benefit transfer mechanism.

The Annapurna Yojana has replaced the earlier Lakshmir Bhandar scheme that was introduced by the previous Mamata Banerjee-led government. While beneficiaries of the previous scheme were initially expected to be automatically included under the new program, the state government later identified several ineligible recipients, including male individuals who had reportedly been receiving benefits.

Following the discovery of such irregularities, the government decided to introduce a detailed 12-page enrollment form to strengthen verification procedures. Officials believe the revised process will help ensure that financial assistance reaches only eligible women while improving transparency and accountability in the implementation of the welfare scheme.

Rahul Gandhi accused the government of undermining education through repeated examination disruptions and controversies.

RaGa blasts govt over exam failures

NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Saturday launched a strong attack on the Central government, alleging that repeated failures in conducting major national examinations have severely damaged India's education system and affected the futures of millions of students.

His remarks came amid reports of technical disruptions during the Common University Entrance Test for Undergraduate admissions (CUET-UG) 2026. According to reports, examination centres in cities including Delhi and Bengaluru experienced technical glitches linked to systems operated by Tata Consultancy Services, resulting in difficulties for candidates appearing for the examination.

Following the disruptions, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced compensatory time for affected students and postponed certain afternoon examination sessions to minimize the impact on candidates.The criticism also follows recent controversies surrounding the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET-UG) 2026 and concerns regarding the evaluation process of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class 12 examinations.

In a post on social media platform X, Gandhi accused the government of repeatedly failing students and questioned its claims about achievements in the education sector.

Referring to a series of examination-related controversies, he wrote that major examinations including NEET, CBSE assessments, Staff Selection Commission examinations, and CUET had faced serious issues. He alleged that despite official claims of transforming India into a global leader in education, authorities had failed to conduct even a single major examination with complete credibility and transparency.

Gandhi further warned that the younger generation, whose academic and professional futures depend on these examinations, would eventually hold the government accountable for the consequences of such failures.

The opposition leader's comments come in the wake of the cancellation of the NEET-UG 2026 examination following allegations of a paper leak. The decision affected nearly 24 lakh medical aspirants across the country who were seeking admission to undergraduate medical courses. The controversy sparked widespread debate over examination security and the integrity of competitive entrance tests.At the same time, the CBSE has faced criticism re garding the evaluation of Class 12 answer sheets after introducing a new digital On-Screen Marking system managed through an external private vendor.

Maurya assures strict action; probe underway

NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Mi nister, Keshav Prasad Maurya, has assured stringent action in the Ghaziabad youth murder case, stating that the state government is committed to ensuring justice and maintaining law and order.

Reacting to the fatal stabbing of a 17-year-old boy in Ghaziabad's Khoda Colony, Maurya said, Whoever the murderer may be, he will not be spared. He will be traced and found, and strict legal action will be ta ken to ensure that the person res ponsible for the murder is punished according to the law, including capital punishment whe re applicable. The government is very serious about law and order, and those involved in such crimes will face the strictest possible legal action.

The Deputy Chief Minister added, We have received information that this is a tragic incident. If there are any accused in this matter, legal action will be taken against them.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Danish Azad Ansari said an investigation into the incident is underway. An investigation is underway into the incident that took place in Ghaziabad, and it is certain that Uttar Pradesh is a state of law and order. Strict action will be taken against whoever is found guilty in this incident.

BJP leader Reena Bhati also reacted to the case, stating, We are only saying that in Khoda Municipal Council, we have never experienced such behaviour before. If one Muslim person has targeted the entire Muslim community, then the Muslim society should also support us if we are right

BJP calls it 'shameful', Opposition hits back

NEW DELHI

A political row erupted after only the opening portion of Vande Mataram was played before the Governor's policy address in the Kerala Assembly. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), on Saturday, called the incident shameful while the Opposition maintained that singing the full song cannot be enforced upon citizens.

Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar on Friday had publicly confirmed that Lok Bhavan had insisted on the full rendition of Vande Mataram during the opening session of the Assembly. However, the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left weighed in on the controversy by backing the existing convention of singing the truncated version.

Reacting on the same, BJP spokesperson Ajay Alok said: It is shameful, absolutely shameful. This is an insult to the spirit of the nation, an insult to the national song, and an insult to our Constitution.

The Central Government has taken this matter seriously and will ensure that henceforth, whenever Vande Mataram is sung, it will be sung in full, he added.

Alok stressed that just like the national anthem, singing the full national song will also be compulsory. BJP spokesperson Pratul Shah Deo blamed the appeasement politics of the Kerala government for not playing the full national song.

Asserting that Vande Mataram reflects the country's national consciousness, he said: If somebody does not play or sing the full national song, it will be an insult to the Centre's guidelines and people may also have to face punishment for this.

Delhi police bust ISI-linked terror network

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell on Saturday arrested nine individuals allegedly linked to a Pakistan- based intelligence and underworld network, while several others have been detained for questioning as part of an extensive counterterrorism operation.

According to investigators, nearly 600 individuals across different parts of the country were found to have been in contact with Pakistani gangster Shahzad Bhatti through various communication channels, particularly social media platforms. Authorities are now examining the nature of these interactions and their possible connection to a wider network.

Among those arrested are Sajid Mehboob Sheikh, also known as Arbaz Khan, who was apprehended in Kurla, Mumbai, and Tauqeer Rizwan Sheikh, who was arrested in the Mumbra area. Both suspects have been transported to Delhi for further interrogation and investigation.

Officials stated that the two men had allegedly received instructions to travel to the national capital, where they were expected to receive further directions regarding their assignments. Investigators claim that funds had also been arranged for their travel and operational activities.

The arrests were carried out during coordinated raids conducted in Kurla and Mumbra. Authorities believe the operation has exposed an alleged network involving Pakistan-based handlers and criminal elements with links to organized crime syndicates.

During the crackdown, the Special Cell reportedly recovered a substantial cache of weapons. Some of those arrested are said to be of Nepalese origin. Police sources indicated that the alleged module had been developed over an extended period and maintained connections with overseas operatives.

Investigators are also probing claims that the network had identified sensitive installations as potential targets. Sources familiar with the investigation indicated that locations such as nuclear facilities, airports, railway stations, and power plants were among the sites allegedly being monitored by the group.

Officials emphasized that the module had remained under surveillance for a considerable period before the arrests were made. Security agencies are now focusing on uncovering possible cross-border links, financial networks, communication channels, and the role of foreign-based handlers in directing the activities of the suspects.

The developments come at a time when Delhi remains on heightened alert following recent intelligence warnings regarding possible terror threats. Earlier this month, security agencies received alerts about potential attacks targeting important offices and crowded public areas through multiple methods, including improvised explosive devices, shootings, vehicle-based attacks, and coordinated strikes.

3 of a family killed as vehicle plunges into gorge in Chamoli

DEHRADUN

Three members of a family lost their lives and three others sustained injuries after the vehicle they were travelling in plunged into a 400–500 metre deep gorge in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district early on Saturday morning, officials said.

The accident took place at around 5:50 a.m. in the forest area near Lwani village. According to officials, the vehicle veered off the road and fell into a deep gorge, triggering an immediate rescue operation involving the police, disaster response teams and local administration.

Sub-Inspector Sandeep Devrani, in charge of the Dewal Police Outpost, informed the Station House Officer (SHO) of Tharali about the accident after receiving information that a vehicle had fallen into a gorge nearly 400–500 metres deep in the forest area of Lwani village.

Acting swiftly, the SHO of Tharali, accompanied by a police team, left for the accident site. At the same time, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Tharali was informed about the incident, and a request was made to deploy a District Disaster Response Force (DDRF) team to assist in the rescue and relief efforts.

Officials said that after reaching the spot and conducting preliminary inquiries, it was found that Balbir Singh, a resident of Bank village in the Lohajung area, was returning to his native village following the death of a family member.

According to officials, the mortal remains of Bhajan Singh were being transported to the village in a private ambulance after he passed away in Dehradun while undergoing treatment. Meanwhile, Balbir Singh and several family members were travelling separately in another vehicle to attend the final rites and accompany the deceased back to their village.

A total of six people were travelling in the vehicle when the accident occurred. Preliminary findings suggest that the driver may have briefly fallen asleep while driving, causing the vehicle to lose control and plunge into the deep gorge. However, authorities are continuing their investigation to determine the exact cause of the accident.

The deceased have been identified as Balbir Singh (52), his wife Shanti Devi (48), and their son Anshu Bisht (18), all of whom died in the crash. The three injured passengers have been identified as Kavita Devi (32), Mayank Singh (8), and Roshni (18). Rescue teams retrieved the injured from the gorge and shifted them to a nearby hospital by ambulance for medical treatment.

SAY NO TO TOBOCCO

TN min calls for vigilance against tobacco addiction

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Food and Civil Supplies Minister P. Venkataramanan on Saturday appealed for stronger public participation in combating tobacco addiction and maintaining transparency in the Public Distribution System (PDS), urging citizens to report irregularities in ration shops and assuring strict action against offenders.

The Minister made these remarks while addressing reporters after inaugurating a tobacco awareness rally at Marina Beach

to mark World No Tobacco Day. He emphasized the importance of sustained awareness campaigns to reduce tobacco consumption and protect public health across the state.

Venkataramanan said Tamil Nadu should strive to become a tobacco-free state, stressing that the harmful effects of tobacco have been well documented for decades. He noted that eliminating tobacco use requires collective efforts from the government, social organizations, educational institutions, and the public.According to the Minister, tobacco addiction continues to affect a large number of people and remains a significant public health concern. He pointed out that addiction often leads to severe health complications and social problems, placing a burden on families and communities. While acknowledging the efforts of organizations and individuals engaged in rehabilitation and de-addiction programs, Venkataramanan said awareness remains the most effective strategy for preventing addiction, especially among young people. He stressed that continuous public education can discourage tobacco use before it becomes a habit and help create a healthier society.

Many people continue to suffer because of tobacco dependence. Awareness and education are essential to ensure that future generations remain free from addiction and its consequences, he said.

The Minister also highlighted the state government's commitment to addressing public grievances and improving the delivery of welfare services. He stated that the administration is actively working to resolve long- standing issues raised by citize ns and ensure that government schemes reach eligible beneficiaries efficiently.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2026-27/1257 DATE: 29/05/2026

E-Retender Notification (Call-3 & Call-4)

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise e-Retenders from Eligible registered contractors for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 2 works under head of account 3054-MDR Maintenance, 1 work under head of account 3054-SH Maintenance and 1 work under head of account 2059-PWD Buildings maintenance, Totally 4 No. of Works, Amount put to tender is minimum of Rs. 4.80 Lakhs and maximum of Rs. 52.80 Lakhs.

Calendar of events:1)Last date for queries & clarifications : 12-06-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 15-06-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 17-06-2026 at 4.30 PM, 4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 5)if no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-348/KSMCA/2026-27

QUICK READ

'Methanol adulteration primary cause of deaths'

Pune

A major breakthrough has emerged in the investigation into the toxic liquor tragedy that claimed 18 lives in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad, with the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) identifying adulterated methanol as the primary cause of the deaths. Acting on information provided by the Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad police, the FDA conducted raids on premises linked to a company named Shri Rex International, which operates an office in Vashi, Navi Mumbai, and a warehouse in Bhiwandi. During the operation, officials seized 5,929 kilograms of methanol that was allegedly being stored illegally.

RTI activist who challenged anti-sacrilege law shot

Chandigarh

A Jalandhar-based RTI activist, Simranjeet Singh, who had recently moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court against the controversial anti-sacrilege law, was shot dead by two bike-borne youngsters outside Lovely Professional University at Chaheru village in Phagwara. Jalandhar Police has provided him with two gunmen. However, he was reportedly moving without security when he was fired upon from close range and died on the spot. On April 22, he filed a PIL challenging the constitutional validity of Punjab's stringent anti-sacrilege law—the Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar (Amendment) Act, 2026.

FSSAI seeks IRCTC response over 'unhygienic' catering

New Delhi

India's food safety regulator body, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on Saturday said it has issued a statutory notice to the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) over alleged unhygienic handling of utensils onboard Train No. 12223 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT)-Ernakulam (ERS) Duronto Express, following a video circulating on social media. The notice was shared by FSSAI on the microblogging platform X, showing it took serious note of a video allegedly showing catering staff or contractual personnel washing utensils.

DELHI RECONSTITUTES PANEL TO ENSURE SMOOTH KANWAR YATRA

Delhi govt has formed a new committee to ensure safe and efficient Kanwar Yatra arrangements.

NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has reconstituted the Kanwar Committee to ensure that the upcoming Kanwar Yatra is conducted in a smooth, safe, well-organised, and spiritually enriching manner.

The move is aimed at strengthening preparations for the annual pilgrimage during the holy month of Shravan, when thousands of devotees travel through the national capital.

According to an official statement issued on Saturday, Delhi Minister for Culture and Law Kapil Mishra has been appointed as the Chairperson of the committee. Five Members of the Legislative Assembly—Ajay Mahawar, Anil Sharma, Karnail Singh, Sanjay Goel, and Umang Bajaj—have been included as members to assist in overseeing arrangements and ensuring the successful conduct of the pilgrimage.

Chief Minister Gupta stated that the Delhi government is committed to providing improved and dignified facilities for Shiva devotees. She said special assistance would be extended to Kanwar camps to help them serve pilgrims more effectively during the religious event.

Highlighting recent improvements, Gupta noted that only 170 Kanwar camps had been approved in the capital in 2024. However, due to the government's simplified approval process, the number increased significantly to a

record 374 camps in 2025. All registered camps were established across different parts of Delhi to accommodate the growing number of devotees participating in the yatra.

The Chief Minister also pointed out that the government had replaced the earlier tender-based funding mechanism with a more transparent system. Under the new arrangement, financial assistance ranging from Rs 50,000 to Rs 11 lakh is transferred directly into the bank accounts of registered organising committees through the Direct Benefit Transfer system. The measure was introduced to improve transparency and ensure timely support for camp organisers.The newly formed committee will focus on key areas such as route management, installation of quality waterproof tents, availability of medical services, uninterrupted electricity and water supply, and enhanced security arrangements. These measures are intended to ensure that devotees can undertake the pilgrimage safely and comfortably.

Gupta described the Kanwar Yatra as more than a traditional religious event, calling it a celebration of India's cultural heritage, public faith, and social harmony. She said the large gathering of Shiva devotees during Shravan reflects the country's cultural unity and spiritual traditions.

The Chief Minister further stated that arrangements for the Kanwar Yatra have evolved beyond routine administrative responsibilities and now represent a symbol of service and devotion in the national capital.

Waqf Board lawyer's murder: Telangana Cong leader, father held

HYDERABAD

Telangana Congress vice president Mujahid Alam Khan and his 84-year-old father, Mahboob Alam Khan, were arrested by Hyderabad police Friday for their alleged involvement in the killing of Waqf Board advocate Khaja Moizuddin.

Moizuddin was killed in the early hours of 23 May when he stepped out of his car for a routine swim in the Masab Tank area. In what was described initially as a hit-and-run case, a green Scorpio rammed into Moizuddin, who was dragged for about 200 metres, causing him grievous injuries.

He was later taken to Mahavir Hospital, where he died. Initially, a case was registered at Nampally station under relevant sections of BNS, and later altered to murder charges following his death, Hyderabad police's handle on X stated.

Myanmar President Hlaing offers prayers at Bodh Gaya temples

PATNA

Myanmar President General Min Aung Hlaing on Saturday visited the revered Mahabodhi Temple and the historic Sujata Temple in Bihar's Bodh Gaya, where he offered prayers for world peace, harmony, and the welfare of humanity.

The visit was marked by extensive security arrangements and high-level administrative monitoring due to the significance of the occasion.

According to officials, President Min Aung Hlaing arrived at Gaya International Airport at around 9:00 a.m. aboard a special aircraft. He was received by senior government officials, representatives of the Bihar administration, and other dignitaries. Following a formal reception at the airport, the President and his delegation proceeded to Bodh Gaya under a tightly coordinated security escort.

Authorities implemented a comprehensive security plan to ensure the smooth conduct of the visit. Multiple layers of security were deployed along the route from Gaya International Airport to Bodh Gaya, with police personnel, intelligence officers, and special security units stationed at key locations.

Upon arriving in Bodh Gaya, the President and members of his delegation were escorted to a designated reception area before proceeding to the Mahabodhi Temple complex. The temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most sacred places in Buddhism, attracts pilgrims from across the globe throughout the year.

Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing visited Bodh Gaya and prayed for global peace and harmony.

At the Mahabodhi Temple, President Min Aung Hlaing offered prayers and paid his respects at the sacred site associated with the enlightenment of Lord Buddha. Officials stated that the prayers focused on global peace, human welfare, and harmony among nations.

After completing his visit to the temple complex, the Myanmar President travelled to the Burmese Buddhist Monastery located on Sujata Bypass Road.

He spent time at the monastery before continuing to the historic Sujata Temple, another important Buddhist pilgrimage site linked to the life of Lord Buddha.

At the Sujata Temple, the President again offered prayers and paid tribute at the sacred location. Members of the high-level Myanmar delegation accompanied him during both visits, reflecting the importance of the trip.

District Magistrate Shashank Shubhankar and Senior Superintendent of Police Sushil Kumar personally supervised the security and administrative arrangements throughout the visit. Officials said preparations had been undertaken well in advance to ensure that all events proceeded smoothly and without disruption.

HP makes dope test mandatory for joining govt service

CHANDIGARH

Now, the Himachal Pradesh government has made a dope test mandatory for individuals before joining government service. The move comes as families are battling an escalating drug crisis gripping youngsters in these tranquil hills.

HP CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, while chairing a meeting with administrative Secretaries in Shimla on Friday, sought details of the action taken against government employees found involved in the trafficking of chitta (heroin).

He said the government had launched a mass movement against chitta and was taking stringent action against the drug mafia. He directed all departments to issue necessary instructions to make dope testing mandatory for individuals before joining service.

On May 11, order was issued to take action against 123 government employees found to be involved in drug-related activities.

Death toll up by 6 in MP tractor-trolley collision

BHOPAL

The death toll in the tractor-trolley accident in Madhya Pradesh's Anuppur district rose to six, while 22 others remained injured, police said on Saturday.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav expressed grief over the incident and announced ex-gratia for the families of the deceased.

The accident occurred in Bijora village under the Karanpathar police station limits in the border area between Anuppur and Umaria districts when a tractor-trolley carrying devotees overturned while returning from a religious gathering.According to police, four people died on the spot, while two more critically injured persons succumbed to their injuries during treatment on Saturday.

According to police, nearly 40 villagers from Ginjri village in Anuppur district had travelled to the Tiwni forest area with their families to participate in religious rituals and worship.

While returning in the evening, the tractor-trolley reportedly went out of control near a culvert and overturned, causing passengers to fall nearly 10 feet from the road to the ground below.

The injured were initially rushed to Pali Hospital through the 108 ambulance service.

Vijay to visit Tiruchy east after poll sweep

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay is expected to visit the Tiruchy East Assembly constituency on Monday to express gratitude to voters and interact with the public following his victory in the recently concluded Assembly elections, according to party sources.

The visit comes at a politically significant time, as the Election Commission is expected to announce a by-election for the constituency in the coming months. Political observers view the tour as an important effort to maintain the strong support base that helped Vijay and his party achieve a historic electoral success.

Vijay's party, the Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), emerged as the single largest party in the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections and subsequently formed the government with the support of its allies. The actor-turned-politician contested from two constituencies, Perambur and Tiruchy East, and secured victories in both seats.

After winning both constituencies, Vijay chose to retain the Perambur seat and resigned from Tiruchy East, making a by-election necessary. His upcoming visit is therefore being closely watched as the constituency prepares for another electoral contest.

According to sources, the Chief Minister will travel from Chennai to Tiruchy by a private aircraft and is scheduled to participate in a public event at a college ground within the constituency. During the visit, he is expected to thank voters for their overwhelming support and acknowledge their role in helping TVK come to power.

In the Assembly election, Vijay secured a decisive victory in Tiruchy East by polling 91,381 votes. He defeated his nearest rival, DMK candidate Inigo Irudayaraj, by a margin of 24,416 votes. Irudayaraj received 63,965 votes, while AIADMK candidate Rajasekaran finished third with 19,715 votes.

Political analysts believe the visit is aimed at strengthening the party's organisational structure in the constituency and motivating party workers ahead of the by-election. The contest is expected to draw significant attention because it will be regarded as the first major electoral test for the newly established Vijay-led government.

Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Division
Office of the Executive Engineer, RDWS&SD,
Panchayath Bhavan, 3rd Floor, Ramanagara Division,
Bengaluru South District - 562 159.
E-mail : eerdwsdrmgr2017@gmail.com

Tender Notification No. : 02/E.E./R.D.W.S. & S.D./RMG/ Tender/AE-1&3JE/JJM/364//2026-27 Date : 16-01-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Rural Water Supply And Sanitation Division Ramanagara is inviting on behalf of Governor of Karnataka State under **Double Cover Bid System** as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 Standard Bid Document. **KW-1, 2 & 3 for Water Supply Works under JJM** through procurement from Registered Contractors as per the Schedule given below.

1) Max. Amount put to Tender Rs. 97.55 Lakhs, E.M.D. : Rs. 1,95,100/-, 2) Min. Amount put to Tender Rs. 09.01 Lakhs, E.M.D. : Rs. 11,300/-, 3) Period of Contract : 06 Months, 4) Last Date for Submission of Tender : 15-06-2026 Upto 5.30 p.m., 5) Opening of Technical Bid of the Tender : 17-06-2026 at 11.00 a.m. Onwards. 6) Opening of Financial Bid of the Tender : 19-06-2026 at 11.00 a.m. Onwards.

For further particulars details may avail from the office of the undersigned during office hours on all working days and may visit the **Website : https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
R.D.W. & S. Department, Ramanagara Division,
Bengaluru South District.

DIPR/Ramanagar/72/Manipal/2026-27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
BENGALURU URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Olo Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, First Floor,
Zilla Panchayat Building, S. Kariyappa Road,
Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple), Bengaluru 560070.
Phone No: 080-26716046 Website: http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

No.EE/PRED/BNG(U)/TND/AE-1/13/2026-27 Dated:29.05.2026

KPPP Tender Notice (Two Cover System)
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited through KPPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Urban, For MLA Grants Works. The work details can obtained from the KPPP Web Site The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before Dated: **06.06.2026 upto 4.00 pm.** Further details can be obtained from website at **http://www.KPPP.karnataka.gov.in** or contact this office during office working hours.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Urban Dist, Bangalore.

DIPR/CP/907/SSC/2026-27

CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
ROBERTSONPET KGF
Phone:08153-260256,
E-Mail: itstaff_ ulb_robertsonpet@yahoo.com
No:CMC/KGF/AEE/TND/02/2026-27 Date:26.05.2026

-: Tender Notification:-
(Through e-procurement only)

(1) City Municipal Council Robertsonpet KGF, invites Tenders From the Construction and supply of works and Service works detailed in the table below. Two Cover tender procedure as per rule 28 of the KTPP rules 2000 shall be followed. **(2)** Tender documents may be downloaded from government of Karnataka e-procurement website: **http://kppp.gov.in (3)** Tenders must be accompanied with earnest money deposit which will be paid online only through e-procurement website: **http://kppp.gov.in (4)** Tenders must be electronically submitted in e-procurement portal. **(5)** Further Information if required can be obtained from the office of the city municipal council, Robertsonpet, KGF During Working hours. **(6)** Head of account: Municipal Fund 2026-27 and CMIDP Grants.

sl no	Name of work	estimated cost (Rs.In Lakhs	category
1	DMA/2026-27/OW/WORK_ INDENT57582	300.00	OTHERS
2	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_ INDENT53058/CALL-3	80.5	OTHERS
3	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_ INDENT53068/CALL-3	50.3	OTHERS
4	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_ INDENT53071/CALL-3	67.5	OTHERS

Sd/- Dr. M. R RAVI, Administrator CMC, KGF
Sd/- Sridhar V, Commissioner CMC, KGF
Deputy Commissioner Kolar District
DIPR/KOLAR/RO:91/KSMCA/2026-27

National Health Mission
DISTRICT HEALTH AND F. W. SOCIETY,
DISTRICT HEALTH AND F. W . OFFICE KALABURAGI

No:NRHM/RCHO/NOC/Klb/20/2026-27 Date: 30/05/2026

CALL-3 TENDER

Sub : 18 Vehicles on the basis of Outsource for the team of RBSK to the 7 Taluka Health office Under, RBSK Programme 4 Wheeler Air conditioner Vehicle (4+1 Seats & 2020 Model) & District, Programme Manager - 1, Air conditioner Vehicle (6+1 Seats & 2023 Model) Toatl 19 Vehicles,Tenders Service by Registered Tours& Travels/Vehicle Owner/Agency for Providing Vehicles with Drivers.

Ref: Valid from Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Panchant Kalaburagi approved the file on Dt: 02/05/2026, Para 291

1) Commodity : Vehicles on the basis of outsource for the team of RBSK to the 7 taluka Health office . Under RBSK Programme. 4 Wheeler Vehicle (4+1 Seated Capacity &2020 & above Model)-18 Vehicles and District Programme Manager -1 , (6+1 Seated Capacity 2023 & above Model) Total 19 Vehicles Called for Vehicle Tenders Services by registered Tours & Travels/ Vehicle owner/Agency fore Providing Vehicles with Drivers, 2) Approximate Amount : As Per KPPP Portal 3)Details of Tender EMD:otal 19 Vehicles Tender Details (With Air condition)

Programme	Rs Per Month Per Vehicle	No of Vehicles	No of Months	Per Year Amount	EMD Amount Total Vehice	EMD Per Vehicle
RBSK Vehicle	35000/-	18	12	75,60,000/-	1,89,000/-	10500/-
DPM Vehicle	40000/-	1	12	480,000/-	12000/-	12000/-

4) Starting Date of Submission of Tender form, 30/05/2026, Afternoon12:00, 5) Pre Bid Meeting Date and Time, 05/06/2026 Morning 11:00, 6) Last Date of Submission of Tender form 10/06/2026 Evening 4:30, 7) Opening Date of Technical Bid, 12/06/2026 Evening 4:30, 8) Opening Date of Financial Bid, 18/06/2026, Morning 11:00, 9) Contact for More Details Member Secretary, District Health & F.W Society, Kalaburagi PH.No 08472-278620.

DIPR/Kalaburagi/174/
Deshpande Publicity/2026-27

Sd/- Member Secretary
District Health& F.W Society, Kalaburagi

QUICK READ

Chinese aircraft, ships detected near Taiwan

Taipei

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence said it detected 16 Chinese military aircraft, eight naval vessels and three official ships operating around the island on Saturday. According to the ministry, all 16 aircraft crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern, southwestern and eastern Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). Taiwan's armed forces monitored the activities and took necessary responses. A day earlier, Taiwan reported 10 Chinese aircraft, eight naval vessels and four official ships near its territory. The latest movement comes amid ongoing tensions over Taiwan, which China claims as part of its territory, while Taiwan continues to govern itself independently.

Neglect threatens future of industrial estate

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The Gadoon Amazai Industrial Estate (GAIE) in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is facing a severe crisis as industrialists warn that prolonged government neglect and rising costs are pushing businesses towards closure. According to source, several factories have already shut down, while many others are struggling to survive. Business leaders cited poor infrastructure, frequent power outages, gas shortages and the estate's remote location as major challenges. They also said transportation costs have risen sharply, increasing expenses for importing raw materials from Karachi and distributing finished products across the country. Industrialists fear the situation could further weaken manufacturing activity and threaten jobs if immediate support measures are not introduced.

Neglected dams deepen Karachi agri crisis

Karachi

Karachi's agricultural belt is facing a growing water crisis as years of poor maintenance and weak governance have left many rainwater dams in disrepair, affecting farming communities in Malir, Gadap and Bin Qasim Town. According to source, the decline of these dams has reduced water storage capacity and lowered groundwater levels, creating serious challenges for farmers. Experts noted that the region has 78 seasonal waterways that could help recharge groundwater if dams were restored and new reservoirs built. Environmentalists have called for the rehabilitation of over 50 dams to conserve rainwater, reduce flooding and support agriculture. Illegal sand mining, deforestation and silt accumulation have further damaged water resources, forcing many farmers to drill much deeper wells to access water.

NAME CHANGE

I, **JUDITTA YONNETTE JOHN BOSCO**, D/o John Bosco, resident of T 1, Jana Jeeva Paradise, Vignana Nagar, Bengaluru 560075, have changed my name to **JUDITTA YONNETTE**, vide affidavit dated: 30.05.2026, before Notary R.BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

'Trump betraying diplomacy for third time with excessive demands'

Tehran has rejected US demands to permanently forgo nuclear weapons and surrender control over the strategic waterway

TEHRAN

Mohsen Rezaei, an adviser to Iran Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, on Saturday accused US President Donald Trump of "betraying diplomacy for the third time" during ongoing negotiations between Washington and Tehran.

Rezaei claimed that the continued naval blockade around Iran and what he described as excessive US demands were damaging efforts to reach a peaceful settlement.

His remarks came a day after Trump announced that he would hold a meeting in the White House Situation Room to discuss the final details of a possible agreement with Iran. The US President also outlined several conditions that he said should be included in any future deal.

According to Trump, Iran must permanently agree not to develop or possess nuclear weapons. He also called for the immediate reopening of the Strait of Hormuz to unrestricted shipping traffic in both directions. In addition, Trump said all sea mines in the area should be removed or destroyed to ensure safe passage for commercial vessels.

The Strait of Hormuz remains one of the world's most important maritime routes, carrying a significant share of global energy supplies. However, the waterway continues to face disruptions as differences between the United States and Iran remain unresolved.

Reports indicate that ships travelling through the strait still face considerable security concerns. To reduce the risk of detection or targeting, some vessels have reportedly switched off their tracking systems while passing through the area.

The ongoing dispute has raised concerns among international markets because the Strait of Hormuz is a key route for oil and liquefied natural gas shipments. Analysts warn that prolonged tensions and restrictions on maritime traffic could affect global energy supplies and trade. Despite continued negotiations, major disagreements remain, leaving the prospects for a final agreement uncertain.

Finalising possible agreement with Iran: Trump

US President Donald Trump said he was finalising a possible agreement with Iran, though Tehran maintained that no final deal had been reached. Trump said Iran must permanently abandon nuclear weapons ambitions, reopen the Strait of Hormuz to unrestricted shipping, remove remaining sea mines, and allow maritime traffic to resume as the US naval blockade is lifted.

Global nations seek stronger security ties

Leaders from developing nations called for inclusive global governance and collective action to address emerging challenges

MOSCOW

Representatives from major countries of the Global South and East stressed the need for stronger international cooperation and a shared approach to global security during the 14th International Meeting of High Representatives Responsible for Security Issues held in the Moscow Region.

According to TV BRICS, the gathering brought together senior officials and policymakers from Russia, India, China, South Africa, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Vietnam and several other nations. Discussions focused on changes in the global order, technological progress and future security challenges.

A central theme of the meeting was the growing influence of developing countries in shaping a multipolar world. Participants highlighted the importance of equal dialogue, respect for national sovereignty and stronger multilateral institutions to deal with modern global issues.

Opening the forum, Russian Security Council Secretary Sergey Shoigu called for closer coordination among countries of the Global South and East. He also supported a greater role for the United Nations and promoted Russian initiatives aimed at strengthening cooperation across Eurasia while avoiding geopolitical confrontation.

India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval said the world is witnessing major political, economic and technological changes. He noted that emerging economies are seeking a larger role in global decision-making and reiterated India's demand for United Nations reforms. Doval also stressed the importance of international cooperation against terrorism.

Chinese official Chen Wenqing reiterated support for multilateral cooperation, international law and global development. South Africa's Khumbudzo Ntshavheni stressed technology, cybersecurity, energy security and regional integration. Brazil's Celso Amorim called for cooperation instead of rival blocs, while Kazakhstan's Gizat Nurdauletov urged new frameworks for water security, digital governance and AI. Delegates agreed that inclusive institutions, balanced partnerships and shared responsibility are vital for global stability.

Trump faces tough choice over Mideast conflict

WASHINGTON DC

Retired US Army Colonel and geopolitical analyst Douglas Macgregor has said that US President Donald Trump faces a difficult political decision regarding continued American involvement in the Persian Gulf and the wider Middle East conflict.

Macgregor argued that most Americans are not closely following developments in the region and would likely support an immediate halt to military operations if Trump chose that path. He said public concern could increase only if instability in the region begins affecting the US economy and energy supplies.

Macgregor warned that disruptions in the Persian Gulf could create serious challenges for the United States. Referring to comments from figures in the oil and gas industry, he claimed that prolonged instability could place pressure on strategic petroleum reserves and affect states dependent on imported oil. He pointed out that California relies significantly on oil supplies linked to the Gulf region.

According to Macgregor, Trump could justify ending military operations by stressing the need to restore stability and ensure the free flow of commercial shipping through the Persian Gulf. He suggested that many Americans and international partners would support such a decision and move on without major opposition.

However, Macgregor claimed that influential pro-Israel groups and wealthy supporters in the United States might strongly oppose any move seen as reducing support for Israel. He argued that some of these groups could threaten to withdraw political backing if Trump changed course on the conflict.

Macgregor said Netanyahu favours continuing pressure on Iran and sees strategic benefits in the conflict. He argued Trump's challenge is whether to distance US policy from Israel's goals, adding there is little sign of such a move currently.

US TERROR LABEL SPARKS DEBATE IN BRAZIL

SÃO PAULO

The United States' decision to classify Brazil's two largest criminal organisations, PCC and Comando Vermelho (CV), as foreign terrorist organisations has sparked political debate in Brazil, with critics raising concerns about its potential impact on the country's internal affairs.

The designation, announced by the US State Department, is expected to take effect on June 5. It will place both groups on the list of "Specially Designated Global Terrorists," allowing the US government to impose sanctions and strengthen international enforcement measures against them.

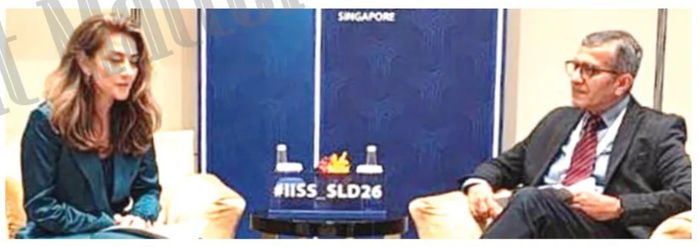
Commenting on the move during the Boa Noite 247 programme, journalist and Brasil 247 special editor in Brasília, Ricardo Amaral, described the decision as "Tariff Hike 2.0." He argued that the measure appeared to be linked more to broader geopolitical and political objectives than to efforts aimed solely at combating organised crime.

According to Amaral, the designation is unlikely to significantly affect criminal operations within Brazil. He said that tackling organised crime depends mainly on Brazilian institutions, including police forces, financial intelligence agencies and coordinated public policies designed to dismantle criminal networks.

He stressed that effective crime-fighting requires a comprehensive approach that combines law enforcement measures with social development programmes and a stronger government presence in vulnerable communities. Amaral argued that addressing the root causes of organised crime requires long-term institutional efforts rather than external classifications.

India strengthens defence ties with global strategic partners

SINGAPORE



India continued its high-level defence diplomacy at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, with Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh holding a series of bilateral meetings with senior officials from the Netherlands, Australia, the European Union and Canada.

The discussions focused on expanding defence cooperation, strengthening military ties and exploring opportunities for defence industrial collaboration with key international partners.

During his meeting with Dutch Defence Minister Dilan Yesilgoz-Zegerius, Singh discussed ways to enhance bilateral defence cooperation and deepen military-to-military engagement. Both sides also explored possibilities for cooperation in the defence industry, reflecting the growing strategic partnership between India and the Netherlands.

Singh also met Australian Defence Secretary Meghan Quinn. The two sides reviewed progress under the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and discussed future high-level engagements. They explored new areas for defence cooperation based on shared strategic interests.

In separate talks with European Union officials, including Secretary General of the European External Action Service Belen Martinez Carbonell and Deputy Chair of the EU Military Committee Enrico Barduani, Singh discussed shared security concerns and ways to deepen defence and strategic cooperation between India and the EU.

Earlier, Singh paid tribute at the Kranji War Memorial, laying a wreath in honour of soldiers who sacrificed their lives during the World Wars. The gesture highlighted the close historical ties between India and Singapore.

On the sidelines of the dialogue, Singh also met Canadian defence official Kelvin Brosseau. Both sides discussed measures to strengthen India-Canada defence relations and identified opportunities for greater cooperation across key sectors.

The meetings underscored India's commitment to expanding international defence partnerships, enhancing strategic engagement and promoting cooperation on regional and global security challenges through dialogue and collaboration.

Curfew worsens humanitarian crisis in Mashkay

BALOCHISTAN

Residents of Mashkay town in Balochistan's Awaran district are facing severe difficulties as a curfew and strict movement restrictions imposed by Pakistani security forces have continued for a second week.

Locals report shortages of food, medicines, and other essential supplies, while daily life and economic activities have been significantly disrupted. Many residents who rely on daily wages and local trade have been unable to work, increasing financial hardship. Concerns have also emerged over healthcare access, with patients reportedly struggling to reach hospitals and clinics for urgent treatment. Similar issues have been reported in Noshki and Zehri, where security restrictions have affected transport, trade, and medical services. Residents continue to seek relief as uncertainty and hardship persist across the affected communities.

Child abuse cases rise within trusted circles of B'desh

DHAKA

Bangladesh is witnessing a worrying increase in violence against children, with many cases involving people known to the victims, according to recent reports and child rights groups. The issue has gained attention following two shocking incidents. In Dhaka's Pallabi area, an eight-year-old child was allegedly raped and murdered, with the body later found in a neighbour's home. In Netrokona district, an 11-year-old girl was reportedly subjected to sexual assault and was found to be seven months pregnant.

A report by child rights organisation Shishurai Shob, based on news reports published in 2025, found that nine out of ten offenders were known to the victims. Immediate neighbours accounted for 40.58 per cent of reported rape cases, followed by acquaintances, teachers or religious instructors, and close relatives. Strangers were responsible for less than 10 per cent of the cases.

The report also revealed that nearly two-thirds of child murders and more than half of sexual abuse cases occurred within homes or family environments. Child rights activists said the findings challenge the common belief that children are mainly at risk from strangers.

Data released by Dhaka-based Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) showed that between January and April, 56 of 81 rape victims of known age were children between zero and 12 years old. During the same period, 63 of 115 children killed were also in the same age group.

CAVE RESCUE

4 rescued from flooded Laos cave

BANGKOK

Rescue teams successfully brought four more people out of a flooded cave in Laos on Saturday, while the search continued for two others who remain missing after being trapped underground for more than a week.

The rescued individuals were among seven Lao nationals who entered a cave in Xaisomboun province to search for gold. Rising floodwaters blocked the cave's exit, leaving the group stranded inside. One man had already been rescued late on Friday, bringing the total number of people rescued to five.

Thai cave diver Kengkard Bongkawong, who is involved in the operation, confirmed through a Facebook post that all four trapped survivors had safely emerged from the cave on Saturday. Video footage released by volunteer rescuers showed the men being escorted out wearing muddy clothes and head-mounted flashlights after their difficult ordeal.

The five survivors were located by rescue teams on Wednesday, but dangerous conditions inside the cave delayed efforts to bring them to safety. Rescue officials said operations would continue until the remaining two missing individuals are found.

The rescue mission has attracted international support. A team of volunteer rescuers from neighbouring Thailand joined the operation last Sunday. Additional experts and divers from Finland, France, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and Australia have since arrived to assist with the challenging mission.

Officials said flooding and challenging underwater routes have complicated the rescue operation. Despite the risks, international teams, including veterans of Thailand's 2018 Tham Luang cave rescue, continue searching for the two missing people. Authorities remain hopeful of locating and safely rescuing them.

QUICK READ

Spice Jet faces GST demand, registration cancellation threat amid

New Delhi

Low-cost airline Spice Jet has been served a GST demand of Rs 124.65 crore by tax authorities for allegedly failing to file returns on time over several months. The demand follows a provisional assessment under the CGST and SGST Acts, 2017. Officials have also issued a show-cause notice proposing cancellation of the airline's GST registration due to repeated delays and compliance lapses. The assessment includes tax demands for November through March. Authorities warned that further action could follow if pending returns are not filed promptly. Meanwhile, Spice Jet continues to face financial pressure, reporting a quarterly net loss of Rs 621 crore and declining revenue.

CCPA fines Vajiram and Ravi over misleading advertisements

New Delhi

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed a penalty of Rs 7 lakh on Vajiram and Ravi IAS Study Centre for publishing misleading advertisements. According to the consumer watchdog, the institute prominently showcased successful UPSC Civil Services Examination 2023 candidates without clearly disclosing the specific courses they had attended. The authority found that many featured candidates had only participated in the Interview Guidance Programme, which begins after clearing the Preliminary and Mains stages independently. CCPA said the omission created a false impression that the candidates were products of its full coaching programmes. The regulator continues to crack down on misleading practices in the coaching sector.

Centre withdraws sugarcane draft after stakeholder feedback

New Delhi

The Centre's decision to withdraw the draft Sugarcane (Control) Order, 2026 for fresh review has been welcomed by Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Singh. He said the move reflects a consultative and dialogue-based policymaking approach, taking into account feedback from farmers, the jaggery and khandsari industry, and other stakeholders. The draft was withdrawn after consultations with state governments and ministries. Officials said the order will be revised before further action. The government had earlier approved a 2.81 per cent hike in the fair and remunerative price of sugarcane for the 2026–27 season, aimed at supporting farmers' incomes and recovery-based pricing adjustments.

NITI Aayog calls semiconductor self-reliance strategic priority

New Delhi

NITI Aayog has termed India's semiconductor self-reliance drive a strategic imperative for realizing the Viksit Bharat vision. It said reducing dependence on imported chips is crucial for economic security, technological sovereignty, and sustained industrial growth. Semiconductors are vital for sectors such as artificial intelligence, defence, telecommunications, and advanced manufacturing. Its roadmap targets a $120–150 billion semiconductor value chain by 2035 through public investment and global partnerships, enhancing domestic capabilities.

Centre approves first PM-SETU plan for Visakhapatnam ITIs

The Centre has approved the first Strategic Investment Plan under PM-SETU, marking a major milestone in skill development reforms.

NEW DELHI

The National Steering Committee (NSC) has approved the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for the Visakhapatnam Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Cluster in Andhra Pradesh, marking the first proposal to receive clearance under the Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU) scheme.

The proposal was submitted by ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India), making Andhra Pradesh the first state to operationalise an industry partnership under the flagship programme by onboarding an Anchor Industry Partner (AIP). The approval was granted during the third meeting of the National Steering Committee convened by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

Officials said the development represents a major step

3rd National Steering Committee
for PM-SETU
(Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs)

toward implementing the PM-SETU vision of transforming government-run ITIs into industry-managed, outcome-oriented institutions. The initiative aims to strengthen vocational education through closer collaboration between industry and state governments.

The meeting was chaired by MSDE Secretary Debashree Mukherjee and attended by Director General of Training Dilip Kumar, along with senior representatives from central ministries, participating state governments, industry bodies and development partners.

According to the ministry, the approval of the Visakhapatnam cluster is a significant milestone in operationalising the industry-led Hub-and-Spoke model envisaged under PM-SETU. The model is expected to enhance training quality, modernise infrastructure and improve employment opportunities for students. Officials believe the project can serve as a model for other states seeking greater industry participation in skill development.

The committee also reviewed the overall progress of PM-SETU implementation across states. Discussions focused on increasing industry involvement, strengthening governance mechanisms, improving the financial sustainability of special purpose vehicles (SPVs), and accelerating project execution.

PM-SETU, with a total outlay of Rs 60,000 crore, aims to transform 1,000 government ITIs across the country through industry-led reforms and improved employability outcomes.

- First PM-SETU investment plan approved
- Visakhapatnam ITI cluster gets clearance
- Andhra Pradesh leads industry partnership
- AM/NS India joins as anchor
- Skill development reforms gain momentum

El Nino threatens inflation outlook despite strong buffers

NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry warned that El Nino could fuel inflation and slow growth, though strong food stocks and reservoir levels provide a cushion

The Finance Ministry has cautioned that the possible development of El Nino conditions during the 2026 monsoon season could intensify existing inflationary pressures and affect economic activity, even as strong food grain stocks and healthy reservoir levels provide some protection against potential disruptions.

According to the ministry's Monthly Economic Review for May, deficient rainfall resulting from El Nino could quickly impact food inflation, rural demand and overall economic growth. The report noted that these risks come at a time when global energy prices remain elevated, adding to inflationary concerns.

The review, however, highlighted several positive indicators. Food grain buffer stocks are currently at comfortable levels, with rice and wheat stocks held by the Food Corporation of India and state agencies reaching 817.53 lakh tonnes at the end of April 2026. Reservoir storage levels were also strong, standing at 123.86 per cent of the decadal average ahead of the monsoon season.

Agricultural activity has shown encouraging signs, with summer crop sowing expanding to 83.08 lakh hectares compared to 80.01 lakh hectares during the same period last year. These factors are expected to provide some resilience against possible weather-related disruptions.

The India Meteorological Department has indicated a likely transition from ENSO-neutral conditions to El Nino during the 2026 monsoon season. Overall rainfall is projected at around 92 per cent of the Long Period Average, though there remains a significant possibility of below-normal rainfall depending on interactions with other climatic factors.

The review noted that rice production has historically remained relatively stable during strong El Nino years due to extensive irrigation coverage. However, pulses and oilseeds, which are largely cultivated in rainfed areas, remain vulnerable to rainfall deficiencies.

While domestic automobile sales continue to show robust growth across segments, a decline in air passenger traffic and concerns over a weaker monsoon suggest that consumption demand may face challenges in the months ahead.

FinMin flags risks amid India's cautious resilience

NEW DELHI

India's macroeconomic indicators in May reflect "cautious resilience," supported by strong services exports, adequate foreign exchange reserves and a stable labor market, according to the Finance Ministry's Monthly Economic Review. However, it cautioned that sustained policy vigilance is required amid rising global and domestic risks.

The report said elevated global energy prices, a weakening rupee, rising upstream cost pressures and the possibility of a below-normal monsoon could collectively strain inflation dynamics and growth prospects. It stressed the need for agility across monetary, fiscal and structural policies to ensure inflation remains anchored while sustaining economic momentum.

The ministry highlighted that the West Asia conflict has emerged as a major disruption to the global recovery. It has increased energy, transportation and logistics costs, triggering renewed inflationary pressures and raising concerns about stagflation in several economies.

Despite external headwinds, India's economy maintained growth momentum in April 2026. High-frequency indicators such as e-way bill generation, PMI readings and electricity consumption remained in expansionary territory, signaling continued domestic demand strength. However, moderation in the Eight Core Industries Index and fuel consumption indicates that global pressures are beginning to impact select sectors.

Inflation trends showed a clear divergence. Retail inflation edged up marginally to 3.48 per cent, remaining below the RBI's target, while wholesale inflation surged to 8.3 per cent due to higher energy prices, currency depreciation and base effects.

The Delhi High Court upheld the rejection of Pernod Ricard's liquor licence applications, citing pending criminal proceedings.

Delhi High Court rejects Pernod Ricard licence plea

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has dismissed a petition filed by French liquor major Pernod Ricard challenging the rejection of its wholesale liquor licence applications, holding that the company currently has a "criminal background" under the provisions of the Delhi Excise Act and is therefore ineligible for an L-1 licence.

Justice Purushaindra Kumar Kaurav upheld the decisions of the Excise Commissioner and the Financial Commissioner, who had denied the company's applications due to its involvement in ongoing criminal proceedings related to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

The court observed that the authorities acted within the framework of the law and that their decision-making process was neither arbitrary nor violative of constitutional principles. It ruled that the existence of pending prosecution against the company was sufficient to attract disqualification under Section 13(1)(c) of the Delhi Excise Act.

Clarifying the interpretation of the provision, the court stated that the requirement of not being convicted of a criminal offence is not the only criterion for determining whether an applicant has a criminal background. According to the judgment, the expression "has no criminal background" must be read alongside the condition of having no conviction, rather than as an alternative requirement.

Pernod Ricard had argued that the law only disqualifies applicants who have been convicted of offences and that pending criminal proceedings should not be treated as proof of a criminal background. The company contended that the authorities had expanded the scope of the law beyond its intended meaning.

However, the Delhi government defended the licence rejection, citing the ongoing prosecution initiated by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the now-scrapped excise policy.

While dismissing the plea, the High Court granted liberty to the company to submit a fresh application if the status of the criminal proceedings changes in the future.

Earlier this month, the Competition Commission of India also ordered an antitrust investigation into Pernod Ricard over alleged exclusive arrangements with liquor retailers in Delhi.

Mid, small caps favored on India's strong macros

NEW DELHI

A neutral stance on Indian equities remains appropriate, with a relative overweight position on mid- and small-cap segments due to India's macroeconomic resilience, according to a report by Motilal Oswal Private Wealth.

The report recommends an asset allocation mix of around 50 per cent in hybrid or large-cap strategies, 40 per cent in small- and mid-cap equities (SMIDs), and 10 per cent in global exposure. It suggests a lump-sum approach for hybrid strategies, while advising staggered investments in pure equity-oriented portfolios.

Despite recent underperformance compared to several global markets, Indian equities continue to benefit from a stable domestic macroeconomic environment. The report noted that SMIDs have shown stronger relative performance, outperforming large caps since the onset of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

On the fixed-income side, the outlook remains cautious, with interest rates expected to stay elevated for longer. The Reserve Bank of India has indicated a pause in its rate-cut cycle, while global inflation risks persist due to higher crude oil prices and currency fluctuations.

The report advises maintaining cash-flow-driven accrual strategies across the credit spectrum. It also warns that renewed pressure on oil prices or the rupee could push bond yields higher.

India's Russian crude strategy seen geopolitically sound move

NEW DELHI

India's continued purchase of discounted Russian crude oil is "on the right track," according to geopolitical risk advisor Colonel Douglas Macgregor (retired), who said the strategy reflects pragmatic energy security thinking amid global volatility.

Speaking in an interview with ANI, Macgregor noted that India's approach helps shield its economy from potential disruptions in global oil supply chains, particularly those linked to escalating tensions in West Asia. He said discounted Russian crude provides both economic relief and strategic flexibility in managing inflationary pressures and external shocks.

He highlighted that global energy markets are currently facing heightened uncertainty due to geopolitical conflicts, which have increased transportation, insurance and crude price volatility. In this context, India's ability to secure lower-cost crude imports strengthens its macroeconomic stability and helps moderate domestic fuel prices.

Macgregor further said that India's energy strategy reflects a broader shift toward resource sovereignty, where nations priorities affordability and supply security over rigid geopolitical alignments. He added that such diversification of supply sources is increasingly becoming a key feature of global energy policy.

India has emerged as one of the largest buyers of discounted Russian crude since 2022, taking advantage of price differentials compared to global benchmarks. The move has been credited by analysts with helping control domestic inflation and maintaining stability in fuel retail prices despite global market turbulence.

However, the strategy has also attracted international scrutiny, with concerns raised over potential secondary sanctions and geopolitical balancing. Despite this, India has maintained that its energy imports are driven by national interest, affordability and energy security considerations.

Macgregor's remarks come at a time when global oil markets remain sensitive to geopolitical developments and supply disruptions. He said India's balanced approach allows it to navigate these uncertainties while sustaining economic growth.

Overall, the assessment positions India's discounted crude imports as a stabilizing economic factor in an increasingly fragmented global energy landscape.

PERNOD LICENCE REJECTION

IIFCL targets ₹75,000 crore sanctions in FY26 growth push

NEW DELHI

India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL) is targeting loan sanctions of around ₹75,000 crore in FY26 following a record performance in the previous fiscal, Managing Director Rohit Rishi said, highlighting strong credit demand across infrastructure segments.

The state-owned infrastructure financing institution also reported a sharp improvement in asset quality, with its non-performing assets (NPA) ratio declining to 0.40 per cent, reflecting tighter risk management and improved recovery mechanisms across its loan portfolio.

According to Rishi, the strong momentum in infrastructure financing is being driven by sustained government capex, increased private participation, and rising demand for long-term funding in sectors such as transport, energy, logistics, and urban development.

He noted that IIFCL's expanding role aligns with India's broader infrastructure growth strategy, as the country continues to prioritise large-scale investments in roads, railways, ports, renewable energy, and digital infrastructure. The institution has been focusing on diversifying its lending portfolio while maintaining a strong emphasis on credit quality and project viability.

Officials said the reduction in NPAs to 0.40 per cent marks one of the strongest asset quality improvements in recent years, supported by better project monitoring and resolution of stressed accounts. The improvement also reflects the broader resilience of India's infrastructure financing ecosystem amid global economic uncertainties.

Rishi added that FY26 is expected to remain a strong year for infrastructure lending, with continued pipeline growth in both public-private partnership (PPP) projects and standalone government-funded projects. He also emphasized the importance of blended finance structures and long-term debt instruments to support large infrastructure projects.

IIFCL's performance comes at a time when India's infrastructure push remains central to economic growth strategy, with the government focusing on enhancing connectivity, boosting manufacturing competitiveness, and supporting urban expansion.

The institution's outlook signals continued optimism in India's infrastructure financing space, underpinned by stable macroeconomic conditions and sustained policy support for capital investment-led growth.

ICC Appoints Dr Ros Rivaz As Independent Director

Dr Ros Rivaz joins the ICC Board, bringing extensive leadership, governance, and strategic experience

LONDON

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has appointed Dr Ros Rivaz as an Independent Director for an initial term of three years, with the possibility of an extension for an additional three-year period. The appointment is expected to strengthen the governing body's focus on corporate governance, strategic planning, and long-term development of the sport.

Dr Rivaz currently serves as Chair of several prominent organisations, including Anglian Water and UK Companies House.

She also holds independent director positions at Aperam SA and Victrex plc, bringing with her extensive experience in corporate leadership, governance, and organisational management across multiple sectors.

Announcing the appointment, the ICC highlighted Dr Rivaz's strong record as an engaged and effective board

member. The governing body noted that throughout her professional career, she has actively participated in site visits, stakeholder consultations, and interactions with government bodies, businesses, and community organisations. Her broad experience has enabled her to develop a deep understanding of governance structures, corporate strategy, operational performance, and institutional accountability.

The ICC stated that Dr Rivaz's expertise is further strengthened by her commitment to diversity and inclusion, qualities that align with the organisation's efforts to expand cricket's reach and strengthen its governance framework.

Her appointment is expected to bring an independent perspective to key strategic discussions as the sport continues to grow globally. ICC Chairman Jay Shah welcomed the appointment and expressed confidence that Dr Rivaz would make a significant contribution to the organisation.

He said her international leadership experience and governance expertise would be valuable as cricket seeks to expand its global footprint and explore new opportunities both on and off the field.

According to Shah, Dr Rivaz's strategic insight, independent outlook, and commitment to strong governance will help support the ICC's efforts to strengthen the foundations of the game and promote sustainable long-term growth. He added that the organisation looks forward to benefiting from her guidance and contributions in the years ahead.

Beyond her corporate responsibilities, Dr Rivaz has also been actively involved in educational and community initiatives. She has supported programmes designed to encourage young women to pursue studies and careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

In addition, she has contributed to various charitable projects and local community development efforts. Her appointment comes at a time when the ICC is focused on expanding cricket into new markets, enhancing governance standards, and ensuring the sport remains inclusive and accessible.

Sangakkara Questions Curran's IPL Exit Amid Return

JAIPUR

Royals coach expressed disappointment after Sam Curran played county cricket despite withdrawing from the IPL.

Rajasthan Royals head coach Kumar Sangakkara has raised questions over Sam Curran's decision to withdraw from the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) after the England all-rounder was seen playing for Surrey in the T20 Blast competition.

Curran had been expected to play a significant role for the Rajasthan Royals after joining the franchise from Chennai Super Kings as part of a trade deal that also involved Ravindra Jadeja.

However, following the T20 World Cup, the all-rounder pulled out of the IPL citing a groin injury, forcing the franchise to seek a replacement.

The Royals subsequently signed Dasun Shanaka as Curran's replacement. Shanaka featured in seven matches for the franchise during the season, including the second qualifier, where Rajasthan's campaign came to an end with a defeat.

Speaking after the match, Sangakkara expressed his disappointment over the situation, stating that the franchise had been informed that Curran was suffering from a season-ending injury. He noted that the Royals would have welcomed the opportunity to have the England international available if he was fit enough to participate in competitive cricket.

According to Sangakkara, the team proceeded with its plans based on the information it had received regarding Curran's fitness status. While he acknowledged that Shanaka had provided cover after being brought in as a replacement, he suggested that the circumstances surrounding Curran's return to action were frustrating for the franchise.

The controversy emerged after Curran was spotted leading Surrey in the ongoing T20 Blast. The England all-rounder has captained the county side in all three matches played so far and has made an immediate impact with the bat. Despite not bowling yet in the competition, he currently stands among the leading run-scorers in the tournament.

Earlier this year, Curran had spoken openly about the injury that forced him to withdraw from the IPL. He explained that he had been managing the issue for some time and that medical scans revealed sufficient damage to warrant a period of rehabilitation.

WI Defeat Pakistan To Continue Winning Run

HAVANA

West Indies continued their impressive start to the Women's Tri-Series in Ireland with a convincing 25-run victory over Pakistan, registering their second consecutive win in the competition. After overcoming hosts Ireland in their opening fixture, the Caribbean side delivered another strong all-round performance to maintain their unbeaten record.

Batting first, West Indies posted a formidable total of 199 for 6, thanks to valuable contributions from several players throughout the innings. Although experienced stars Deandra Dottin and Qiana Joseph failed to make significant scores, captain Hayley Matthews provided a blistering start.

Matthews attacked the Pakistan bowlers from the outset, scoring 40 runs from just 20 deliveries. Her aggressive knock included nine boundaries and laid a solid foundation for the innings before she was dismissed. Following her departure, veteran batter Stafanie Taylor continued the momentum with a composed innings of 39 runs.

Same intensity every game, one of Sai biggest strengths - Gill

AHMEDABAD

There were some concerns and more than a few raised eyebrows at the start of IPL 2025 when Gujarat Titans revealed that Jos Buttler would bat at No. 3. The Englishman, surprisingly released by Rajasthan Royals, is one of the great white-ball batters of his generation and had built a remarkable IPL career as an opener. The Titans instead chose to elevate Sai Sudharsan alongside captain Shubman Gill, a decision that has since become one of the defining features of their success. Last year, they amassed 912 partnership runs at a run rate of 9.56. This season, they have raised the tempo to 10.56 while still retaining remarkable consistency, reaching 886 runs together. Another 54-run stand in Sunday's final would take them past the all-time IPL record set by the legendary Royal Challengers Bengaluru pair of Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers during their groundbreaking 2016 campaign. Like Kohli and de Villiers before them, Gill believes a strong personal equation underpins their success at the crease. "You know we spend a lot of time in the IPL together on the field, off field as well and then we are in the Test team as well, so we have a lot of conversations. There are things that we talk about cricket, outside of cricket," Gill said ahead of the final.

Jurel praised Rajasthan Royals' approach and highlighted the importance of confidence in guiding young bowlers

Dhruv Jurel Reflects On Royals' Positive IPL Campaign

CHANDIGARH

Rajasthan Royals wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel reflected on his team's IPL 2026 campaign after their journey ended with a seven-wicket defeat to Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 2. Despite narrowly missing out on a place in the final, Jurel expressed pride in the positive brand of cricket played by the Royals throughout the season.

The knockout clash in New Chandigarh saw Rajasthan Royals post a formidable total of 214 for 6, largely due to a sensational innings from Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who scored 96 runs and put his team in a strong position. However, Gujarat Titans responded emphatically, led by captain Shubman Gill, whose magnificent unbeaten 104 guided his side to victory and secured a place in the IPL final against defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

Speaking after the match, Jurel shared insights into his role as a wicketkeeper and the approach he adopts while working with bowlers, particularly young players making their debut in the tournament.

He explained that rather than instructing bowlers on specific deliveries, he focuses on building their confidence and helping them trust their abilities. According to Jurel, debutants often face immense pressure and uncertainty, making reassurance and encouragement more valuable than technical advice during high-pressure situations.

The wicketkeeper said he understands the challenges faced by newcomers because he has experienced similar situations himself. He noted that young players can easily become overwhelmed by the magnitude of the occasion, leading them to overthink their decisions and lose confidence in their natural game.

Jurel emphasized that giving excessive instructions can sometimes create self-doubt among inexperienced players. Instead, he prefers to remind them that they have earned their place in the team through their talent and hard work. By encouraging them to back their instincts and commit fully to their plans, he believes they can perform with greater clarity and confidence.

From behind the stumps, Jurel sees his role as offering support and reinforcing positive thinking. He aims to assure bowlers that their decisions are sound and that they should focus on execution rather than worrying about potential mistakes.

Reflecting on Rajasthan Royals' overall campaign, Jurel maintained that the team consistently played attacking and positive cricket throughout the season. Although the Royals fell short of reaching the final, he suggested that their approach and performances provided several positives to build upon for future seasons.

The campaign also showcased emerging talents and strong team performances, helping Rajasthan Royals remain one of the most competitive sides in the tournament. While the defeat to Gujarat Titans ended their title hopes, Jurel's comments highlighted the team's belief in its methods and commitment to playing fearless cricket throughout IPL 2026.

Eagle Thane Strikers appoint Shardul Thakur as captain

MUMBAI

Eagle Thane Strikers have announced India all-rounder Shardul Thakur as captain for the upcoming edition of the T20 Mumbai League 2026, starting on June 1.One of Mumbai cricket's most accomplished performers, Shardul Thakur, brings a wealth of experience to the leadership role, having represented India across formats and played a key role in several domestic and franchise competitions. The appointment reflects the franchise's ambition to build on last season's semifinal finish and mount a strong challenge for the title this year. The Eagle Thane Strikers will head into the tournament with a balanced squad comprising experienced campaigners and exciting young talent. Under the guidance of newly-appointed head coach Dhawal Kulkarni, the team will look to play an aggressive brand of cricket and take the next step after narrowly missing out on a place in the final during the previous edition. Expressing his delight after being named captain, Shardul Thakur said, "It is an honour to lead Eagle Thane Strikers in the T20 Mumbai League. We have a talented group of players and a coaching staff with tremendous experience. The focus will be on preparing well, playing positive cricket, and giving our best in every game. We want to create a winning culture and make our fans proud."

McCullum faithful of Stokes, England ahead of home season

LONDON

The England men's cricket team are heading into the upcoming home series against New Zealand on the back of a 4-1 drubbing at the hands of Australia in their last ICC World Test Championship outing.

After 10 matches in the ongoing 2025/27 cycle, England are placed seventh in the Standings with a PCT of 31.67.

Despite the recent performances, head coach Brendon McCullum is confident that his team can turn the tide and emerge as a 'more robust' side.

We've made some significant progress in the last four years but the job isn't done, McCullum told Sky Sports.

I think our best days are in front of us as a cricket side. I think a lot of stuff we have developed over the last four years will allow us to shape our side as we move forward.

Following the disastrous Ashes loss and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup earlier this year, where England finished as the semi-finalists, McCullum was retained as the head coach across all formats.

One of the notable criticisms of the England Test team during recent times has been their aggressive style of play. McCullum believes finding a balance will hold the key for England in the coming days.

I firmly believe positive and aggressive cricket can live with smart cricket, he said.

We play a strong style but sometimes when we get ourselves in winning situations we don't necessarily do what needs to be done.

We need to navigate through those moments with the necessary calm, poise and tactical awareness to ensure you close games out.

I'd like us to be a team that people recognise for how we play but also understand that we are fiercely competitive, well-prepared, clearly talented and tactically clever.

I am confident that with the sharpening we have identified that we can become a more robust side when the pressure is at its highest, one that will be hard to beat and give ourselves the best opportunities in big series, which is the one area we have missed. We have a fierce ambition to achieve that.

Shaheen Afridi on Pakistan quicks losing speed: 'Machines deteriorate with time'

LAHORE

In Pakistan, there is concern about the dwindling speeds of their fast bowlers, to the extent that the National Cricket Academy is devising a plan to try and overcome it, according to ODI captain Shaheen Shah Afridi on the eve of the series opener against Australia in Rawalpindi.

Pakistan have a rich legacy of express fast bowlers, but the current crop remains under scrutiny because of their inability to match the pace of their contemporaries. The drop in speed has more often than not hampered the team's ability to dismiss oppositions twice in Test matches.

Their speeds were under the scanner throughout the 0-2 series Test series defeat for Shan Masood's team in Bangladesh. Across both Tests, the average speed of the Bangladesh fast bowlers (high-130s to mid-140s) was higher than Pakistan's (mid-120s and early 130s).

The decline in Afridi's bowling speed has been noticeable. He has struggled to bowl at 140kph consistently since his comeback from a knee injury in 2022, impacting his effectiveness. He was dropped for the Sylhet Test and had also been left out of the side for the second Rawalpindi Test against Bangladesh in 2024.

It was a stunning change in fortune for Afridi, who was considered to be Pakistan's spearhead at the turn of this decade. Before the fateful dive in Galle that halted his Test career for a year, Afridi picked up 99 wickets at 24.86. His next 27 wickets have been at over 40 runs apiece.

Afridi said Bangladesh seamer Nahid Rana's performance in that Test series - 11 wickets in two Tests while bowling consistently in the high-140s - could not be seen in the same lens as Pakistan's because he is still young at the international level.

First of all, Bangladesh fast bowler [Nahid] Rana must have played seven-eight matches, he said. It is a norm that machines deteriorate with time. We are trying to recharge ourselves.

You can put more pace in the ball when your body has had rest, but our bodies remain always at Pakistan's disposal. All the bowlers are thinking about how they can increase their speeds. Some of our bowlers are playing Tests and the others are playing ODIs so they stay fresh.

Vinesh Phogat Reaches Asian Games Trials Semifinals

Vinesh Phogat advanced to the semifinals after securing two victories in the Asian Games trials

NEW DELHI

Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat continued her impressive return to competitive wrestling by booking a place in the women's 53kg semifinals at the Asian Games selection trials in New Delhi on Saturday.

The experienced wrestler began her campaign with a convincing 7-1 victory over Jyoti before overcoming a stern challenge from Nishu in the quarterfinals. Vinesh emerged victorious by a narrow 7-6 margin in a closely contested bout, moving one step closer to securing a place at the Asian Games.

Her participation in the trials came after a dramatic sequence of events over the previous two days involving both the Supreme Court and the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). The uncertainty surrounding her eligibility was resolved only when the Supreme Court permitted her to participate in the selection process.

Competing in her preferred 53kg weight category, Vinesh initially appeared slightly

rusty during her opening match against Jyoti. She secured the first point through a push-out and gradually began to impose herself through effective standing wrestling. The contest became more competitive when she was placed on the activity clock early in the second period, prompting her to increase the intensity of her attacks.

Vinesh responded strongly by executing a successful leg attack that resulted in a takedown and a 3-0 advantage. She then displayed her trademark defensive awareness and counterattacking ability. After successfully defending a leg attack from Jyoti, she capitalized on the opportunity to score four additional points, extending her lead to 7-0. Although Jyoti managed a late push-out point, Vinesh comfortably secured a 7-1 victory. The quarterfinal against Nishu proved to be a far more demanding encounter. Unlike her opening bout, the match remained closely fought from start to finish, with both wrestlers exchanging points throughout. Vinesh ultimately held her nerve to register a narrow 7-6 win and advance to the semifinals.

The former World Championships medalist now stands just two victories away from earning a place in the Indian team for the Asian Games. Her return to the 53kg category was made possible after the WFI revised its earlier decision that had restricted her to competing in the 50kg division.

The change came following internal discussions within the federation and intervention from WFI president Sanjay Singh. Vinesh had strongly opposed the original decision, arguing that the restriction was unfair and discriminatory. Elsewhere in the trials, Antim Panghal made a dominant start by defeating Tannu through technical superiority in just 34 seconds.

KAPIL DEV'S Support Boosts Indian Golf's Growth

PGTI chief says Kapil Dev's involvement has strengthened confidence and credibility within Indian golf.

NEW DELHI

The association of cricket legend Kapil Dev with Indian golf has provided the sport with significant credibility and renewed confidence, according to Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) Chief Executive Officer Amandeep Singh Johl.

Speaking about Kapil Dev's expanding role within the organisation, Johl said the former World Cup-winning captain's commitment to golf has sent a powerful message about the sport's potential and future in India. He described Dev's involvement as an endorsement from one of the country's most respected sporting figures, highlighting the opportunities that exist within professional golf.

Johl noted that it is uncommon for a sports icon of Kapil Dev's stature to actively support and promote a discipline outside his own. He pointed out that while many influential figures contribute to the growth of cricket, very few have chosen to invest their time and reputation in advancing another sport.

According to Johl, Dev's journey within the PGTI structure demonstrates his belief in golf's future. Beginning as a board member, later serving as vice president, and now taking on a leadership role with the DP World PGTI, Kapil Dev has consistently backed efforts to elevate the sport's profile and expand its reach.

The PGTI chief said that Dev's involvement has reinforced the belief that Indian golfers can compete successfully at the highest international level. He emphasized that India possesses the talent and potential to produce champions capable of excelling on the global stage and bringing greater recognition to the country within the golfing world.

Johl added that Kapil Dev's support has inspired confidence among players, administrators, and fans by demonstrating that Indian athletes can aspire to be among the best in the world regardless of the sport they pursue.

While discussing the progress made by golf in India, Johl also acknowledged the challenges facing the sport, particularly in securing sponsorship and financial support. He said many corporations continue to perceive golf as an elite activity associated primarily with wealthy individuals, making it difficult to attract broader investment.

According to him, one of the key objectives of the PGTI is to change this perception and highlight that golf is accessible to people from diverse economic backgrounds. He stressed that many successful Indian golfers have emerged from humble beginnings and achieved remarkable success through determination and hard work.

India win 2 gold medals in women's wrestling in Vietnam

NEW DELHI

India's young wrestlers delivered a strong showing in the women's wrestling events at the U17 Asian Wrestling Championships in Da Nang, Vietnam, securing two gold, two silver, and one bronze medal on the day.

Diksha (43kg) led the charge with a dominant run, defeating Asangaryeva (Kyrgyzstan) 6-0 in the final to clinch gold. She had earlier outclassed opponents from Kyrgyzstan (8-0) and Vietnam (10-0) en route to the summit clash.

In the 73kg category, Garima produced an attacking masterclass to overpower Namuuntsetseg Batbold (Mongolia) 18-6 in the final and secure India's second gold medal. India added two silver medals through Nikita (49kg) and Antra (65kg). Nikita went down 2-10 to Yuan Yuting (China) in the final, while Antra lost 0-5 to Siyu Wei (China) in her gold medal bout after an impressive run that included a hard-fought semifinal win over Japan.

Sakshi (57kg) claimed India's lone bronze of the day, bouncing back from a narrow semifinal defeat to beat Arina Kuanyshova (Kazakhstan) 10-0 in the medal playoff. India's continued success at the age-group level underlines the depth of emerging talent in women's wrestling, following the country's strong performance at the U23 Asian Championships earlier this week.

Gwalior Cheetahs unveil squad featuring Rajat Patidar for MPL T20 Scindia Cup

GWALIOR

Gwalior Cheetahs unveiled their squad for the upcoming Madhya Pradesh League (MPL) T20 Scindia Cup season. The team includes IPL-winning captain Rajat Patidar and skilled fast bowlers such as Akash Singh Raghuwanshi and Mangesh Yadav, bolstering the pace attack with quality and versatility.

Patidar led Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) to their maiden IPL title in 2025, and continued to showcase his fine skills at the helm in the ongoing edition as well, as his side marched into the final and are set to face 2022 champions Gujarat Titans on Sunday.

Madhav Singhania of Gwalior Cheetahs commended RCB skipper Rajat Patidar and expressed confidence in the team's overall balance and strength.

We are delighted to have Rajat Patidar in the squad. Winning an IPL title as captain speaks volumes about his leadership qualities and experience. Our squad has a very good balance of experienced players and exciting young talent, which gives us a lot of confidence going into the season. We believe this is a strong and settled group capable of playing positive cricket throughout the tournament, said Madhav Singhania.

Gwalior Cheetahs will start their campaign against Ujjain Falcons at the Holkar Stadium in Indore on June 3. MPL 2026 will be the largest edition to date, with 10 men's teams and five women's franchises participating.

Three new franchises have been introduced to the men's tournament: Malwa Stallions, Ujjain Falcons, and Royal Nimar Eagles. They join the reigning champions, Bhopal Leopards, along with Bundelkhand Bulls, Chambal Ghariyals, Gwalior Cheetahs, Indore Pink Panthers, Jabalpur Royal Lions, and Rewa Jaguars.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY DEFEAT

India Draw Women's Hockey Series Despite Final Defeat

PERTH

The Indian Women's Hockey Team concluded its four-match friendly series against Australia with a hard-fought 3-2 defeat in the fourth and final match in Perth on Saturday. Despite the loss, the visitors finished the series on level terms, with both teams winning two matches each.

India made a bright start and took control of the contest almost immediately.

In just the second minute, Navneet Kaur successfully converted a penalty corner to hand India an early advantage and put pressure on the hosts.

The visitors continued to dominate proceedings and extended their lead in the second quarter. Deepika Soreng found the net in the 23rd minute with a well-taken conversion, giving India a commanding 2-0 lead.

Their disciplined defensive structure and effective ball control ensured that Australia was unable to respond before the break, allowing India to carry the two-goal advantage into half-time.

Australia, however, staged a strong comeback in the third quarter. The hosts reduced the deficit through Abby Wilson in the 42nd minute before Olivia Downes equalised just two minutes later. The quick succession of goals shifted the momentum firmly in Australia's favour and set up a tense final quarter. With the match appearing destined for a draw, Australia found the decisive breakthrough late in the game.

Courtney Schonell scored in the 58th minute, completing the comeback and securing a narrow 3-2 victory for the hosts. Although India narrowly missed out on a series triumph, the tour provided several encouraging signs for the team. After losing the opening match, India demonstrated resilience and determination by recovering strongly to win the next two encounters, showcasing both attacking flair and defensive discipline.

One of the highlights of the series came in the third match when India produced an impressive 2-0 victory over Australia. The contest remained goalless during the first half as both sides maintained disciplined defensive structures and limited scoring opportunities.

Raksha Khadse hails Pooja's stellar performance at U20 Athletics Championships

NEW DELHI

India's rising high jump star Pooja received high praise from Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Raksha Khadse after scripting history with a gold medal-winning performance at the 22nd Asian U20 Athletics Championships in Hong Kong.

The young athlete cleared 1.93m to win gold and set a new national record, surpassing the previous mark of 1.92m held by Sahana Kumari since 2012. Her effort also eclipsed the championship record of 1.90m set by Uzbekistan's Svetlana Radzivil in 2006.

Congratulating the teenager on her landmark achievement, Khadse said the nation was proud of her accomplishment and hailed her journey as an inspiration for aspiring athletes across the country.

India is proud of you, Pooja.

Your flight will continue to inspire generations to come to reach new heights, Khadse wrote in a post on social media.

The minister described the gold medal-winning leap as a historic moment for Indian athletics, noting that Pooja had first improved her own Under-20 national record by clearing 1.91m before going on to scale 1.93m and claim the senior national record as well.

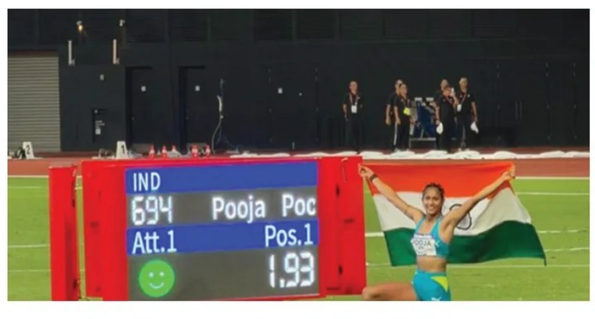
According to Khadse, the achievement made Pooja India's all-time No. 1 women's high jumper and helped her surpass the 14-year-old national record set by Sahana Kumari.

The jump also enabled her to attain the qualification standard for the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

First, she cleared 1.91 meters to improve her own Under-20 national record. Immediately after, with a stunning 1.93-meter jump, she also claimed the senior women's national record in her name.

This is the highest height ever achieved by any Indian woman in the high jump, she said.

This is not just a gold medal, but a flight of dreams, dedication, and tireless hard work.



D Gukesh Embraces The Pressure And Possibilities Of Being WC

NORWAY

At 20, D Gukesh is carrying a burden few in chess ever faced the weight of being a world champion. Yet with a title defence looming, the Indian Grandmaster sees those expectations not merely as pressure but as an opportunity to test his limits, build character and emerge stronger. As he bid farewell to his teenage years, Gukesh remained one of the main attractions at Norway Chess, where organisers marked the rest day with a sailing trip on the calm waters of the Oslofjord.

Bringing together all 12 players from the Open and Women's tournaments, the outing offered a rare chance to unwind, recharge and gather fresh energy before the demanding rounds ahead.

But even amid the scenic backdrop, Gukesh appeared deep in thought -- perhaps unsurprising given his difficult start to the tournament, where he currently sits at the bottom of the six-player standings. It was a reminder of the struggles he had spoken about before the event, as he continues to navigate the unique pressures that come with wearing the world champion's crown at such a young age. It's (expectation) something that obviously I've had to deal with and sometimes struggled with. But pressure is also a privilege, so it's a chance for me to grow through the challenge.

Belgium are capable of achieving great things: coach Garcia

BRUSSELS

Belgium football head coach Rudi Garcia has shown firm belief in his side to achieve great things as they gear up for their fourth consecutive FIFA World Cup appearance.

Belgium are placed in Group G with Egypt, Iran and New Zealand, and the 62-year-old coach has set a clear goal of coming out on top in the group stage and securing a favourable draw for the next round.

We need to distinguish between our objective and our ambition. Our priority is to get through the group stage. Let's come out on top so that we earn a more favourable draw and, ideally, stay put [in Seattle for the Round of 32]. That will be the objective! Garcia told FIFA in an interview.

Belgium suffered a shocking group-stage exit at the Qatar 2022 World Cup but are in a much better place in the ongoing tournament, as their opponents are less experienced than they are. With 14 World Cup campaigns already under their belt, they possess vastly greater pedigree on the global stage than the rest of the group combined, eclipsing Egypt's three, Iran's six and New Zealand's two appearances to date.

Although the odds appear to be in their favour, Garcia is taking nothing for granted. We have a huge amount of respect for the other three sides in our group, he stressed. This is what the World Cup is all about. We know Egypt well; they're one of the best teams in Africa. I know all about Mo Salah as I coached him at Roma. We're also up against a team from Oceania and one from Asia. We're obviously less familiar with them as we don't see them play as often, but we're looking forward to finding out what the Iranian and New Zealand teams are made of.

Let's start by respecting our group-stage opponents.

CITY HILIGHTS News That Matters

Karisma Kapoor Returns as Troubled Cop in Brown Series

The trailer of the upcoming crime thriller series Brown was released on Saturday, giving audiences a glimpse of Karisma Kapoor in a powerful new role as a police officer struggling with her past. The series will premiere on June 5 on ZEE5.

Set in Kolkata, Brown is a neo-noir psychological crime thriller directed by Abhinay Deo and produced by Zee Studios. Karisma plays Rita Brown, once considered the city's best police officer, but now a disgraced and alcoholic cop haunted by painful memories. Her life takes a dramatic turn when a series of shocking murders shakes the city, beginning with the killing of a businessman's daughter.

As Rita returns to investigate the case, she joins forces with Inspector Arjun, played by Surya Sharma. Together, they enter a dangerous world filled with corruption, violence and hidden secrets. As they move closer to the killer, both officers are forced to confront their own emotional scars and unresolved guilt.

The series also stars Jisshu Sengupta and Soni Razdan in important roles. Karisma said Rita Brown is one of the most challenging characters she has portrayed, describing her as vulnerable yet resilient. Jisshu praised the show's emotional depth and layered storytelling. According to the makers, Brown focuses on redemption, trauma, healing and the complexities of human nature, making it more than a conventional crime thriller.

Emilia Clarke Denies Exaggerated Game Of Thrones Salary Claims

Actress Emilia Clarke has dismissed long-standing rumours about the salaries earned by the cast of the hit fantasy series Game of Thrones, saying the figures reported over the years were greatly exaggerated.

In a recent interview with Variety, Clarke rejected claims that she and several co-stars earned as much as USD 300,000 per episode during the show's run. Responding to the reports, she said the cast did not earn that much and joked that she would have been driving several luxury cars if the figures were true.

Clarke, who played the iconic role of Daenerys Targaryen, did not reveal the actual salaries but maintained that published reports significantly overstated the cast's earnings. She also chose not to comment on earlier reports suggesting some lead actors received up to USD 500,000 per episode.

The series premiered in 2011 and concluded in 2019 after eight successful seasons. Alongside Clarke, the show featured actors such as Kit Harington, Lena Headey, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau and Sophie Turner.

Clarke recalled that she experienced equal pay treatment during her time on the series. Speaking previously about pay parity, she said her salary was not affected by her gender.

The actress also reflected on the fame that came with the show's global success and spoke about surviving two brain aneurysms in 2011 and 2013 while filming. Clarke said the medical emergencies deeply affected her emotionally, but she overcame the challenges and completed all eight seasons, becoming one of the show's most celebrated stars.

AJITH KUMAR'S MOTHER MOHINI MANI PASSES AWAY AT 84

Actor Ajith Kumar's mother, Mohini Mani, passed away on Saturday in Chennai. She was 84 years old. According to family sources, she breathed her last after age-related health issues, leaving family members, friends and admirers mourning her loss.

Mohini Mani is survived by her three sons, Ajith Kumar, Anup Kumar and Anil Kumar. News of her passing drew condolences from several personalities from the film industry and political circles.

Among those expressing grief was C. Joseph Vijay. In a message shared on social media, the Chief Minister said he was deeply saddened by the news of Mohini Mani's death. He prayed for her soul to rest in peace and conveyed his heartfelt condolences to Ajith Kumar and his family during this difficult time.

Actor and politician Kamal Haasan also expressed sorrow over the loss. In his condolence message, he said he was deeply saddened to learn about the passing of Ajith Kumar's mother and extended his sympathies to the actor and his family as they cope with the loss of their beloved mother.

Mohini Mani largely stayed away from the public spotlight despite being the mother of one of Tamil cinema's most popular stars. Her passing has saddened many fans of Ajith Kumar, who have taken to social media to offer prayers and support to the family. Messages of condolence continue to pour in from colleagues, well-wishers and fans, remembering her life and expressing solidarity with the grieving family during this period of loss.

Athidhi 4K Re-Release Draws Massive Response From Fans

The 4K re-release of Athidhi has generated strong excitement among fans, with packed theatres and celebratory scenes reported across several locations. The Telugu action thriller, starring Mahesh Babu, returned to cinemas on May 29 in a digitally restored format.

Fans gathered in large numbers to welcome the film back to the big screen. Popular theatres in Hyderabad, including Sudarshan 35mm and Prasads, witnessed enthusiastic crowds. Videos shared online showed audiences cheering, dancing and celebrating during screenings, turning the re-release into a festive event.

According to reports, advance bookings for the film across India reached around Rs 62 lakh, while worldwide opening collections were estimated at nearly Rs 97 lakh. The majority of the earnings reportedly came from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, while overseas collections remained comparatively modest.

Social media was flooded with reactions from fans praising the film's performance despite several challenges. Many pointed out that the re-release was not linked to a holiday, festival or special occasion and faced competition from ongoing entertainment events and upcoming releases.

On the same day, Mahesh Babu also attracted attention after being spotted at Mumbai's Kalina Airport. Videos of the actor dressed in an all-white outfit with sunglasses and a white-and-blue cap quickly went viral on social media platforms.

Directed by Surender Reddy, Athidhi originally released on October 18, 2007. The film featured Amrita Rao in her Telugu debut, alongside Murali Sharma and Ashish Vidyarthi. The movie later inspired the Bangladeshi remake Durdhorsho Premik and remains a popular title among Mahesh Babu's fans.

ALIA BHATT

To Portray Alpha Killer In Upcoming Film

Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt is set to take on a bold and unconventional role in the upcoming Yash Raj Films action entertainer Alpha. According to sources associated with the production, the actress will play a highly trained assassin described as an alpha killer.

Reports about her character have been circulating on social media for some time. A source close to the project confirmed that Alia's character is not a traditional spy or a conventional hero. Instead, she plays a deadly assassin who has been raised and trained to kill from a young age.

The source revealed that Yash Raj Films chief Aditya Chopra wanted to create a fresh and unique protagonist for the YRF Spy Universe. Unlike the heroic characters introduced earlier, Alia's role is expected to be more complex and independent, with a personality that follows its own rules rather than seeking approval from others.

According to the source, this approach reflects modern audiences' preference for exciting and unconventional characters. The makers believe the role will offer a new perspective within the expanding spy universe and bring a different style of action-driven storytelling.

The film also stars Sharvari in a key role, while Bobby Deol will portray the main antagonist. Veteran actor Anil Kapoor also plays an important role in the movie.

Directed by Shiv Rawail, known for directing the acclaimed web series The Railway Men, Alpha is scheduled to release in theatres on July 3. The film is expected to be a major addition to the YRF Spy Universe with its female-led action narrative.

JANHVI KAPOOR

Rules Out Malayalam Films Due To Language

Actress Janhvi Kapoor has said that she is not considering working in a Malayalam film anytime soon, citing the difficulty of learning and speaking the language. The actress made the remarks while promoting her upcoming Telugu sports action drama Peddi, which stars Ram Charan in the lead role.

In a conversation with, Janhvi expressed her admiration for Malayalam and described it as a beautiful and sweet language. However, she admitted that she finds it challenging to speak and does not feel confident about taking up a Malayalam-language project at present.

Although she has not acted in a direct Malayalam film, Janhvi already shares a connection with Malayalam cinema. Her 2022 film Mili was a Hindi remake of the acclaimed Malayalam thriller Helen. More recently, her upcoming film Param Sundari also allowed her to portray a character with strong Malayali roots.

The actress added that she is more familiar with Tamil and Telugu and would be interested in exploring opportunities in Tamil cinema. She said she has enjoyed working in Telugu films and would love to be part of projects in Kollywood in the future.

Janhvi has received a positive response from Telugu audiences and is currently focusing on her projects in the industry. In Peddi, she plays the character Achiyamma. Directed by Buchi Babu Sana, the film is set in Andhra Pradesh and follows the story of a villager who unites people through sports. The cast also includes Shiva Rajkumar, Jagapathi Babu, Ravi Kishan and Boman Irani in important roles.

Premalu 2 Shelved As Script Fails Expectations

Fans waiting for a sequel to the blockbuster Malayalam film Premalu have received disappointing news, as lead actor Naslen has confirmed that Premalu 2 has been cancelled for now.

Directed by Girish A D, Premalu emerged as one of the biggest Malayalam hits in recent years. Starring Naslen and Mamitha Baiju in the lead roles, the romantic entertainer was set in Hyderabad and won praise for its engaging story, performances and youthful appeal. The film also crossed the Rs 100 crore mark at the box office.

Following its success, the makers announced plans for a sequel. However, updates on the project remained scarce, leading to speculation about delays. Earlier, producer Dileesh Pothan had indicated that the sequel was unlikely to move forward.

Speaking in an interview with Club FM, Naslen confirmed that the project had officially been shelved. He explained that despite efforts to develop the sequel, the script did not reach the level of perfection expected by the team. According to the actor, certain technical and creative challenges prevented the project from progressing further.

Naslen, however, left the door open for a possible revival in the future, stating that the sequel could still happen if the right script is developed.

Meanwhile, the actor remains busy with several upcoming projects. Reports suggest he will be seen in Suriya 47, directed by Jithu Madhavan and starring Suriya. He is also associated with Bachelor Party 2 by Amal Neerad and Mattancherry Mafia, directed by Khalid Rahman and featuring Mammootty in the lead role.

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